THE ASSAULT OF HEAVEN

COLLECTION OF OFFICIAL AND OTHER INFORMATION RELATING TO THE PERSECUTION OF RELIGION AND CHURCH IN RUSSIA

Compiled by
A. A. VALENTINOV

With a preface by
PROFESSOR PETER STRUVE

1924

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THE ASSAULT OF HEAVEN

The Black Book containing official and other information illustrating the struggle against all religion carried by the Communist [Soviet] Government in Russia.

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Compiled by
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PREFACE

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"These are fountains without water, and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved. For, speaking proud words of vanity, they allure by the desires of fleshly riotousness, those who for a little while escape, such as converse in error: Promising them liberty, whereas they themselves are the slaves of corruption. For by whom a man is overcome of the same also he is the slave." (2 of St. Peter.)

The book which is being here submitted to the attention of the readers represents a modest attempt at giving a description of the persecutions of religion and Church in Soviet Russia, based upon first-hand material.

This material is certainly incomplete and not always of an equal quality. But it is sufficiently ample, trustworthy and impressive to disclose to the reader the character of that stubborn and systematic struggle which the Soviet Government is carrying on against religion and Church. That struggle is not what is called nowadays religious and Church policy of the State. Till now when a modern State carried this or

that policy with regard to religion and the Church[1]), it set to itself definitely circumscribed, purely legal objects, not aiming at either destroying or supporting any creed.

The Soviet Government acts otherwise. To it is due the peculiar honour of having resuscitated the methods of the Inquisition under atheistic auspices. The Soviet Government may be compared to a lay sword acting at the instigation and in the interests of militant atheism.

This main idea is expressed in the formula which frequently occurs in the Soviet antireligious press, viz. "the assault of Heaven."

Every political and social movement, although it may be focussed in one single idea, at the same time serves of course the interests of a more or less wide or narrow group of men and is being made use of by them in their aspirations for power. Thus, e. g. the seizure of Church valuables by the communists was dictated by their material interests. It was, on the part of the group of men in whose hands the authority lies, a peculiar form of hunting after stable currency values.

But it would be sheer rationalism, unpardonable in our days, to deduce the antireligious policy of the Soviet Government merely from the longing for

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[1]) The best examples of such policy I hold to be the "Kulturkampf" of Bismarck, the struggle of the American Federal Government against Mormonism and the Disestablishment of the Church in France under Combes and Briand.

power and to explain it by nothing but conscious and selfish deceit, as did the atheists and agnostics, including the Marxians, explain the origin of religion and religion itself.

Destruction of religion, moral devastation of the souls — that is the spiritual essence of the Soviet Government, deprived of which it becomes merely a band of thieves and scoundrels, degenerates into something petty and mean.

There is a genuine pathos, an ideological *grandeur* of atheistic fanaticism in the Communist struggle against religion — and in that lies the great, I should say universal, importance, and also the main contradiction and weakness, one could almost say perversity of the whole movement. Religious intolerance, even in its most extreme and cruel forms, including the inquisition of all creeds, always had for its counterpart some p o s i t i v e religious ideal. Auto-da-fes were erected and people were burnt in the name of some positive creed which was thus to be vindicated. That intolerance and that cruelty were somehow mitigated by the religious faith that accompanied them. And when a more refined and more human conception of the religious life of man at last triumphed, it led to the assertion of religious toleration as an indispensable condition of religious belief. Herein lies the great meaning of the R e f o r m a t i o n in its most extreme manifestations which were first to proclaim r e l i g i o u s t o l e r a n c e a s a r e l i g i o u s l y i n d i s p e n s a b l e d e m a n d. Later this idea got

secularized and became a purely formal claim, which not only could be reconciled, but actually became psychologically bound up, with religious indifference. Religious toleration was proclaimed by Rodger Williams[1]), it was preached by the Quakers[2]). Voltaire merely popularized it.

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[1]) The name of Rodger Williams is connected with the proclamation of religious tolerance by the founders of North-American colonies. Iellinek in his remarkable little essay "The declaration of the rights of man and citizen" (Ist ed. 1895, 2nd ed. 1904) which reveals the religious foundations of the idea of innate rights, thus speaks of Rodger Williams: "In 1629 the Puritans founded the second colony in Massachusets—Solem. Forgetting the persecutions from which they had to suffer at home they proved themselves intolerant towards those who did not agree with their doctrine. In 1631 arrived in Massachusets a young independent called Rodger Williams, who was soon elected as priest by the Solem Community. He began to preach in favour of complete Disestablishment of the Church and to demand unlimited toleration with regard not only to other Christians, but also to Jews, Moslems and heathen: they all were to enjoy equal civil and political rights in the State, the religious belief being a private matter of every man and having nothing to do with the State. Williams was persecuted and expelled, and in 1635 he founded with a few faithful followers a town called Providence, on the territory of the Indian tribe Naraganset. It was to serve as a refuge to all those who suffered from religious persecutions. In the Covenant signed at the foundation of the town the colonists pledged themselves to obey the laws carried out by the majority of votes, but only "in matters civil", religion being entirely exempted from legislation. Here then the unlimited freedom of religious convictions was for the first time proclaimed — by the man himself instinct with ardent faith."

[2]) "We do not realize" — says an eminent modern English scholar — "how much we owe to the quakers . . . for proclaiming this great doctrine (of universal toleration) and,

The atheist fanaticism of the Soviet Government has no justification of faith. It is inquisition without faith, religious indifference without toleration and benignity.

Such godless fanaticism is not a religion of course. For religion means something more than a mere devotion however complete and unselfish to some idea. It means the assertion of some transcendental values lying beyond the reach of experience. Religion means the assertion of, and the living in, God. Thus the psychological foundation on which the Soviet "assault of Heaven" is based, combines all the negative sides of the religious process

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what is more, ultimately establishing it by their passive but stubborn resistance" and he proceeds to quote from the "Apology"of Robert Barclay the following splendid lines:

"The forcing of men's consciens is contrary to sound Reason, and the very Law of Nature. For Man's Understanding cannot be forced, by all the Bodily Sufferings another man can inflict upon him, especially in matters spiritual and supernatural. This argument and evident Demonstration of Reason, together with the Power of God reaching the Heart, that can change a Man's Mind from one opinion to another, and not Knocks and Blows, and such like things; which may well destroy the Body, but can never inform the Soul, which is a free Agent, and must either accept or reject matters of opinion, as they are born in upon it by something proportional to its own nature. To seek to force minds in any other manner, is to deal with men, as if they were Brutes, void of understanding; and at last is but to lose one's labour, and as the Proverb is: To seek to wash the Black-moore White. By that course indeed men may be made Hypocrites, but can never be made Christians". (Apology, 4th ed., p. 497.)

Karl Pearson. Life and letters of Francis Galton. Cambridge 1914. Pp. 27-28.

without any of the positive ones. It is a religion, free from belief, and an atheism full of fanaticism and intolerance.

This serves to explain the devastating influence of this self-contradictory movement, which combines atheism with fanaticism, upon the soul of the Russian people. It is impossible to exaggerate that devastating effect among the large masses of the population with their feeble culture and their credulity.

But in that intrinsic inconsistency of the militant atheism lies also its weakness. Atheism being purely negative cannot inflame genuine fanaticism although it suffices to create a moral incendiary in the souls of men, dooming them to waste and destruction.

From no point of view is it therefore possible to look not only with sympathy, but even with indifference, upon the work which is being now done in Soviet Russia by the communists. Helpless to create anything new, they undermine and destroy the deepest spiritual foundations of individual and social life. It is truly a devil's, devastating work. Russia was doomed to become the object of their atheistic experiment in which the party fanaticism and the religious indifference have been melted into a horrible reality.

Russian people lived always an intense religious life which sometimes went on in deep and unseen channels and took peculiar forms inconceivable to the foreign eyes. Even now the great ordeal has not extinguished the religious life of the Russian people, but has purified and awakened the religious spirit. Yet

we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that while purifying and sublimating the ones, who are spiritually the strongest, the destructive work of the communists leads to the peril of others, more weak and more numerous. It must be therefore regarded as a great national calamity with which there can be no reconciliation[1]). The Soviet Government's war upon religion

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[1]) It is hard to find words for expressing one's disgust of the official atheistic literature of the bolsheviks which betrays the real meaning of their struggle against religion. This literature is a mixture of cynicism of the roughest sort with the most insipid obscenity based upon the abuse of a certain naiveness of the Old Testament and upon the flippant mockery at the most refined Christian mysticism. All this is offered to the reader under the "scientific" cloak, which has really nothing to do with science. It is enough to say, that the thought of the "mythical" character of Christ's personality is being here invariably put forward as an undeniable scientific discovery. Everyone who is acquainted with the present state of the history of Christianity knows that the denial of the "historicity" of Christ cannot be based upon any concrete data of historic documents, being merely a peculiar rationalistic hypothesis. But for those Russian "scholars" Drews is a greater authority on history than Harnack or Deissmann. At some recent trial the ignorant Soviet "expert" on the history of religion, a certain Spitzberg, flippantly declared to the still more ignorant judges: "That which is called Jesus, never existed in reality". The same learned "expert" of the Soviet Government declared that the stories of the persecutions against the first Christians "were an invention of the malevolent fancy . . . of the Church authors of the antiquity and of the modern bourgeois historians" *(ipsissima verba!)* In the advertisment of the publishing firm "The Atheist" St. John Chrysostom is called a prominent bigot of the IVth century while St. Gregory is described as "the most eminent police-agent of the Emperor of Constantinople and the worst oppressor of the revolutionary movements of his time".

lies beyond the domain of politics and cannot be judged by political standards. With all its filthiness, it is much more deep and significant than any political movement could ever be. Therefore in this matter political intolerance and political opportunism are equally helpless and senseless. The war that goes on is a war between the militant atheism and the very foundation of all religion — the belief in God. Shortsighted are those opportunists who think they can bribe the Devil and Antichrist by political obedience, but blind are also those radical politicians who think that political forms and programmes are at stake in this struggle. Whatever be our own political attitude we are not interested in discussing the political and legal aspects of this spiritual struggle. On one hand, the political and legal essence of the Soviet (Communist) Government is quite clear; on the other hand to reduce the problem of religious struggle in Russia to politics means to abase it and to betray a lack of understanding. It would be just as wrong as to represent the great struggle of Christianity against Paganism as some political or social conflict. To one who would like to think over the situation of the Russian Church in the days of its hardest ordeal we could recommend to study the work of the famous Christian apologist of the II—III century, Tertullian, on the "Escape of the persecuted Christians" (De fuga in persecutione) especially chapters 10 and 11 which we will give here in the exactest possible translation:

"Many people, leaving aside the Godly exhortations,

are more willing to apply to themselves the well-known lay saying which runs: He who saves himself by running away, can fight anew[1]). Yes, but he will probably run away again. How and when will he vanquish when he has already been vanquished by running away? Will he be a good soldier of his leader Christ who having been fully equipped by the Apostles will run away from the battle-field on hearing the sound of trumpets? And I will say to you with a reference to the lay authors: "Is it such a shame to die?"[2]) One has to die, in any case, whether as a victor or as a vanquished... I prefer the man whom I have to bewail to the one of whom I must be ashamed. He who falls on the battlefield is better than he who saves himself by running away. Thou art afraid of a man, thou, a Christian whom the angels even ought to fear for thou wilt judge them; whom even the demons ought to fear for in thee the whole world will be judged. Thou hast clothed thyself unto Christ, for thou hast been baptized unto Christ. If thou runnest away from the devil it means that thou humblest Christ who is in thee... But if thou runnest from God thou betrayest thereby the vanity of thy intention to all the fugitives. Once a proud prophet fled from our Lord and sailed over from Ionia to Tharsis placing as it were the sea between himself and the Lord. But he found the Lord not on sea, nor on

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[1]) The words of Demosthenes after the battle of Chairone.
[2]) The words of Virgil in Aen., XII, 646. Cp. Suet. Nov. 47.

earth, but in the entrails of a beast wherein he could not die for three days. Even there he could not escape from God. And how much better does the servant of God who, although he is threatened by the enemy of God, despises this enemy relying upon God's help, and godfearing confronts him saying: This is the Lord; He is Almighty; everything belongs to Him; wherever I be, I am in His hand; let His will be fulfilled; I shall not retreat and if He wants to destroy me let Him do it while I am keeping myself for Him. I prefer to perish at His will than to inflict His wrath by self-willed salvation.

"Every servant of God must think and act in this way, even those who stand on a lower grade, for having suffered from persecutions they may reach the higher one[1]). But if the governing persons, i. e. the deacons, the presbyters and the bishops, will save themselves by running away, how will the lay men understand in what sense it is said in the Scriptures: if you will be persecuted in one town, go to another[2]). If the leaders are thus running away, how can the rank and file remain in their places. No doubt, the good shepherd gives his life away for his flock; thus Moses in whom our Lord Christ was already prefigured, although He had then not yet disclosed himself, said: If thou wilt destroy this people, crush me also

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[1]) Upon those Christians whe had suffered from persecutions a special dignity was conferred and they were called "confessors".

[2]) Math. 10, 23.

wich them[1]). And since Christ confirms his emblems, a bad shepherd is he who runs away at the sight of wolves leaving his flock to be lacerated[2]). Such a shepherd is expelled by his master; his wages are taken from him, and even his former property goes to compensate the loss of his master. 'For he who has will be given more and from him who has not it will be taken[3]).' And Zachariah threatens: 'O, sword! rise against my shepherd ... and the sheep will disperse and I shall lay my hand on the shepherd[4]).' Similar threats are uttered by Jezekiel and Jeremiah against such shepherds not only because they impiously partake of the sheep and thus pasture rather themselves and not the flock, but also because they let the flock disperse and become the prey of wild beasts. And this happens most of all when the clergy leaves the Church during the persecutions. If it is not becoming or rather not permitted for those who stand at the head of a flock to run away when the wolves break in (for he who called such a shepherd a bad one, has condemned him, and everything that is condemned is certainly not permitted) then the governing persons in the Church ought not to run away during the persecutions. And if the flock has to run, the shepherd ought not to remain standing, for then he would be of

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[1]) Exod., 32—33.
[2]) John, 10, 11—12.
[3]) Math., 13, 12; 25, 29.
[4]) Zachariah 13, 7 (This text is not quite identical with the one which is accepted now. P. S.)

no use to the flock which would not need a defense, since in this case it would be permitted to run."

In this essentially clear and yet concretely complicated way was put and discussed in the II-IIIrd century A. D. the question, as to what has the Christian flock to do during the persecutions. When we now reflect upon the atmosphere and conditions of the persecutions of the Christians by the pagan State, we see that the true Christians did unflinchingly bear their cross in those days and that the struggle for religion was carried on quite outside politics. It was a struggle marked with great sense of sacrifice and still greater love to God.

In the minds of the early Christians paganism was not associated with Government and politics. In the same way the Christians in Russia to-day do not look upon the Soviet Government and the Soviet régime as mere "political institutions" and "political forms" in the ordinary meaning of the word. Inasmuch as the Soviet Government becomes merely a political form, it ceases to exist spiritually, it is transferred to some other plane. When we turn our minds to the epoch of early Christianity we do not mean to draw any parallels between that epoch and our own time. Our time is more terrible. From the religious as well as from the general cultural point of view the militant communistic atheism is something quite incomparable either with paganism in its struggle against Christianity or with anything known in history. The religious struggle during the French Revolution, however dis-

gusting may be some of its details, was nevertheless somehow pervaded with the religious spirit. The anti-religious work of the Soviet Government is a war against God and faith carried on consistently and on principle in the name of the cynically conceived "deified humanity". Such an intense and concentrated struggle — this must be always emphasized — is not known in the history of mankind.

The Europeans very often do not understand that the Russian Communist revolution is thousand times more cruel than any despotism that ever raged against this or that group of believers for inasmuch as it denies individual self-determination in all fields including the economics, it encroaches much more radically upon personal freedom and freedom of conscience than any other historical régime. It is enough to ask oneself: could the quakers for instance hold their own and carry their religious freedom through all the ordeals, if the economic régime of their age did not strengthen their resistance? — in order to see that side by side with the deep moral and spiritual difference between the old religious persecutions and the Soviet war upon religion and the Church, there is also between them — sociologically speaking — an unbridgeable gulf. The social and political tyranny of the Soviet regime is something without a parallel in the history, whereas spiritually it is primarily a war upon religion and God. The very socialism of the Soviet Government is much less an economic aspiration, than an ideological conception which combines

the negation of God with the denial of personal freedom. In its ideas the modern Russian communism is a direct heir of the antireligious rabies of Bakunin — without his anarchical individualism, but with a refined system of police which consciously and with a great psychological skill makes use of the meanest instincts of the individual and of the crowd. It is therefore extremely naive and stupid to think that the Soviet regime as it existed till now, and is reflected in the communist ideology, stands for some sort of Russian Reformation based upon social and political revolution. From whatever dogmatic point of view we approach the question it is perfectly clear that historically the Reformation as a spiritual movement was inspired by the genuine religious sentiments, and not by the fanaticism of atheism. Whereas the bolsheviks say quite plainly: "We must act so that every blow ... against the traditional structure of the Church, against the clergy ... etc. — that every such blow should become a blow against religion in general."

"It would be bad if faith having discarded some of its equipment, should gain a new and less vulnerable position. We must see to it that with that equipment the entire ship of faith goes to the bottom."

That leads to the following conclusion: "it would be no gain for us, if the sects would profit by the dissolution of Orthodoxy. The transition must be direct from Orthodoxy to atheism."

"Even the blind perceive clearly that we need a resolute struggle against the priest whether he be

called the pastor, the abbot, the rabbi, the patriarch, the mulla or the pope; at a certain stage this struggle must inevitably be transformed into the struggle against God whether he be called Jehovah, Jesus, Buddha or Allah."

Thus writes the chief inspirer of the antireligious work, comrade J. Stepanov, an eminent communist and one of the translators of the Marx' "Capital".[1])

It must not be forgotten that the war against religion and the Church in the name of atheism, although it is essentially a war of principle, is carried on in Soviet Russia by purely police methods, forming one of the branches of the state activities regulated by the orders of the Government. It is a police organisation of atheism, kept at the State's expense by the Government which has abolished all civil liberties. From the political point of view what is essential in the Soviet Government's militant atheism, is precisely this police form, which means the denial of the principles of the legal State. From the religious point of view the contents that fill that form are essential, viz. the absolute denial of God. Both aspects of the struggle are revealed with extraordinary clarity in the circular of the communist party which is given *in extenso* below. Here we give the most essential and characteristic parts of it:

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[1]) Cp. his leading work on the question entitled "The objects and methods of antireligious propaganda", Moscow 1923.

"In our decrees it is definitely proclaimed, just as in the Erfurt programme, that religion is a 'private matter' of individual citizen. But while the 'opportunists' had the tendency to read into those words the meaning that the State ought to adopt towards religion the policy of 'crossed hands', the revolutionary Marxism recognizes the duty of the State to carry on a most resolute struggle against religion by means of ideological *(sic!)* influence upon the large labouring masses. In many a case the comrades had proposed to our opponents to arrange disputes on equal footing. This tendency to regard the priests as an equal party in the dispute is nothing short of democratic eructation, betraying an opportunist inclination towards freedom: we give no freedom to obscurants and never acknowledge their right to obscure the conscience of the masses. We allow them to speak at the 'workers' meetings not in order to 'seek the truth', but merely in order to divulge their lies. 'Dispute for the sake dispute' — is a foreign, democratic formula. We go to the disputes only on the condition that they serve as an instrument for our class objects, helping to strengthen the class conscience of the proletariat. Otherwise we must not give in; we must not give to our enemies, for the sake of the 'abstract' justice, the opportunity to fight about the truth. We know on whose side the truth is and in this matter we want no assistance from the priestcraft..."

The combination of police violence with militant atheism — such is the real essence of Russian com-

munism as a historical force. To it is due the devastating influence of this evil force against which the whole religious world ought to rise as a man.

The famous English Roman Catholic thinker, Cardinal Newman, once said: "there is no medium between catholicism and atheism". The Russian communistic experiment permits us to say more generally and accurately: there is no medium between faith and atheism. In this lies the great lesson of the terrible calamity that has befallen Russia.

And we pray ardently that this lesson might be understood by the whole world. Upon that depends the welfare of it, as well as of Russia. For Russia offers us the aspect of a country devastated and tormented by atheism which possesses unlimited and despotic power. It is terrible that this power should deny entirely the legal forms of freedom. But it is still more terrible that the pathos — if any — with which this power is pervaded, should be the p a t h o s o f a t h e i s m a n d d e s t r u c t i o n i n t h e n a m e o f a t h e i s m.

PETER STRUVE.

Prague, August 1923.

INTRODUCTION.

Russian exiled students have asked me to draw up an "act of accusation" concerning the most terrible crime of the Government of the 3rd International. I was asked to draw up such an act "as would make the world, busy with its own affairs, stop to think, be it for one minute only". Itestify that the authorship of this act rests from the beginning to the end not with me but with the accused themselves. It is written with their own hands.

Al. Valentinov.

THE ASSAULT OF HEAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

General views of the Soviet Government upon the destruction of Religion and Church.

Those views have been again and again embodied in hundreds and thousands of leaflets and magazines as well as in millions of flyleaves spread all over Russia. They could fill many books with thousands of pages in them.

Their essence can be summed up in the following quotations:

> "In culture and civilisation we solve a double problem, — the liquidation of the spiritual feudalism of the Middle Ages, with its abhorrence of flesh, of things material, and the ruthless fight against the dictatorship of the bourgeois fatness and comfort, in the name of the relations between man and thing... (N. 1.)[1])

[1]) Numbers in the text refer to the index of sources which will be found at the end of the book.

"In order to make its grip on the lower masses still faster, the bourgeois class had, besides the material weapons, also the moral ones — the press, the school and the Church.

"We have already done away with the press — we have gained the main point by getting all the printing apparatus into our hands; to the school we are also putting the end, — the lower parts of it belong to us, the upper ones are turning into proletarian ones and are already half on our side.

"The Church remains — the chief instrument of depression and stupefaction of the proletarian masses. The working class of Soviet Russia has already got rid of the prejudices on which religion and Church are founded. The Church has been finally disestablished. It is isolated from the proletarian Government and ceases to be the instrument of the Government — religion becomes the matter for believers to deal with.

"Can we stop on that way? No, we cannot! It does not suffice that we do not utilise religion in the interests of the Government, in the interests of the upper class, as it used to be of old, our task is to fight against religion — and we do it!

"In the school, in the club, in a society, — everywhere we oppose to all mysticism and devilry scientific materialism! However, it is

not enough to fight religion in that scientific way in our schools, we must introduce a political element into it! Religion and the Church are bound up with the bourgeoisie — the working class setting out against the bourgeoisie must also combat actively and energetically the instruments of its domination.

"What we need in that fight is daring and energy. There must be a single proletarian front against religious prejudices." (N. 2.)

"... we must do away with the counter-revolutionary Church. It represents the last stronghold of the reactionary forces of the bourgeoisie. The end of the old mediaeval Church, the accomplice of monarchy and serfdom, is not very distant. We must accelerate it and thus destroy the last counter-revolutionary organisation on the territory of Soviet Russia.

"Of course we cannot stop at that. We must go on fighting against religious prejudices and superstitions. Our aim is not to "renovate" the Church, but to abolish it, to eradicate all religion. That aim can be achieved only when the society will be reorganised upon communistic principles. That takes a long time. The "renovation of the Church" which is being carried out at present by the progressive and democratic part of the clergy as well as the laity is but one of the

stages on the way to the emancipation of the working masses of Russia from the aegis of the Church and from religious intoxication. It clears the way for us. We are consequently interested in the victory of the "living Church". But the old Church is far from being dead whatever the people may say. It has got to be killed. An end must be put to the ecclesiastical counter-revolution." (N. 3.)

"The Church is the last vestige of the political organisation of the vanquished classes which has till now preserved its full force." (N. 4.)

"So far we had no time to pay serious attention to religious prejudices. We were confronted with things much more urgent and important. But now the time has changed and soon all this filthy idolatry will be swept away." (N. 5.)

"The bourgeoisie uses the Church as a means to keep its hold on the popular masses, being able to penetrate with its tentacles so deep as nobody else would.

"The Church is the propaganda department of the bourgeois State. Frauds and hypocrisy are its essential features.

"The workers are born unbelievers; but to disbelieve is not enough. All evil must be actively fought against.

"The bourgeoisie has been vanquished in Russia. In other countries its power is shattering. That is why it is clinging so fast to religion. Its scholars use most cunning devices in order to prove the existence of God. Its writers are paying lip-service to Him, are praising His mercy and His wrath. The priestcraft is anxious to unite its forces on a world scale. In America the congress of all the religions is assembling whose aim is to combat the revolution of the working classes. We must fight them with all our force and energy." (N. 6.)

"... Religion is the last stronghold of the bourgeoisie, it must be destroyed ..." (N. 7.)

"The bosses of all countries whose chief concern is to enslave the labouring masses always looked upon religion as a ring in the bull's nose. The idea of the sufferings of God, the Saviour of all labouring and needy, is more destructive to the spirit of activity than all the physical whippings ... For that reason the employers of all countries, the bloodsuckers who feed upon the sweat of the oppressed labouring classes, were always convinced Christians and spent large amounts of money on the propaganda of the religion of Christ among the workers, thus undermining their will to struggle.

"'Christ has risen' — they yell trying to stifle the groans of the suffering proletariat.

"'No' — is our resolute answer to them. Your right to dispose of the lives of workers will never return: the reign of plutocracy has been overthrown with the bayonets of the proletariat.

"Down with the bourgeoisie!

"Down with the hangmen of popular freedom!

"Down with the instruments of torture and slavery! Down with our enemies!

"Down with the religious mystifications!

"The lies of the priestcraft and the foul idea of Christian humility in the face of capital are gone forever!" (N. 8.)

"It is high time that we dispersed the religious mystifications of the bourgeoisie. Down with religion, this opium of the people... Down with God. Let us break the chains of spiritual slavery." (N. 9.)

"The workers need no more God and priests than the liberated slave needs his chains." (N. 10.)

The meaning and the significance of religious faith are thus defined by the bolsheviks:

"The belief in God has been invented by the rich in order to keep the poor in the state of oppression'...

"... The belief in, and the reliance upon, God whoever He is — whether Jewish, Moslem, Christian or Buddhist — weakens the will to struggle, to reorganisation of the world...

"All religions and all gods are equally intoxicating and poisonous for the mind, will and conscience. We must fight ruthlessly against them." (N. 11.)

The meaning of the altar and of the worship of saints is characterised in the following words:

"The altar and the police station are the two sections of the same department "for oppressing the labouring and the humble". That is precisely the reason why among the saints who have been canonised by the priests there are so many of those who felt at home among the hired hangmen and lackeys of the old regime." (N. 12.)

Still simpler is the explanation of the nature of the Christian God:

"... The heathen gods were fond of blood and very often their worshippers offered them their own children or strange people, making the gods drink human blood, painting with it the lips of the idols. The heir and the successor of the heathen gods, the good God of the Christians, is much more fastidious in his taste." (N. 13.)

Consequently,

> "there is no ground for religion nowadays. The socialistic revolution that is going on produces an echo everywhere by awakening the working masses. It leaves no place for religion even in an improved form; on the contrary it does away with religion." (N. 14.)

The above views and principles have found their expression also in the official publications and instructions of the Soviet Government and of the communist party. On p. 51 of the "Communist (bolshevik) programme" (compiled by N. Bukharin) we read:

> "The belief in God is the reflection of the disgraceful social relations of this world, it is tantamount to belief in slavery." (N. 15.)

Some of the party circulars show us that it is the duty of every communist to conduct anti-religious propaganda. At the same time it is manifest from them how difficult it is to make even the communists carry out that duty.

The Moscow "Pravda" published an appeal to all the members and all the organisations of the Russian Communist party asking them to send in "concrete suggestions as to the best way of fighting against the breaches of the party programme in the religious matters". That appeal was made necessary because

> "nearly every organisation had to come across the cases of the breach of the communist programme in matters religious. The

clause of the programme which makes anti-religious propaganda the duty of every member is frequently evaded. Whereas the party as a whole is engaged in anti-religious propaganda, its members not only abstain from it, but even help to strengthen the religious rites, not being able to oppose the prejudices of the backward mass of population with whom they are economically and otherwise connected." (N. 16.)

The Programme of the Communist party makes anti-religious propaganda the duty not only of grown up communists, but also of the young generation, as may be seen from the rules of the "Union of Communistic Youth". Paragraph 5 of the Section concerning political education of the programme adopted at the 3rd All-Russian Conference of the Unions of Communistic Youth runs as follows:

> "The aim of the All-Russian Union of Communistic Youth is to bring up conscientious communists. Therefore it regards as its duty to fight the religious disease which demoralises the young generation and enables the bourgeoisie to deceive the people." (N. 17.)

Amongst the first measures directed against religion very important was the discontinuation of salaries to the representatives of various religious denominations in the schools and the elimination from the latter of all objects of religious worship. As the Commissariat

of Education explained, it was intended o carry out the educational work on entirely irreligious lines.

In the period of time from 1918 to 1921, which may be described as the first stage of religious persecutions, the clergy was everywhere being expelled from the church houses, its personal estate was confiscated on the plea of it having been "robbed from the working people", the sale of candles in churches was prohibited. All that was but a preliminary to the wave of relentless terror.

Some documents whose veracity is beyond any doubt bear witness to all the sufferings of the Russian Church during those terrible 3½ years, which were yet not the worst.

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions against clergy during the civil war.

Out of the great number of documents only a few are reproduced below as specimens. They belong to three categories: 1) Those compiled and signed by well-known Russian lawyers; 2) those compiled and signed by the representatives of the foreign missions; 3) those compiled and signed by the Russian clergy.

The first category refers to the parts of South Russia which were sometime occupied by the White Armies; the second category refers to Siberia; and the third to Northern Russia.

The documents of the first category entitled "The protocols of the Special Commission of Investigation with the South Russian Armed Forces" represent a collection of protocols taken on the spot by the above Commission. It follows from those protocols that in the Don Region and in the Province of Kharkov not a single church was left which were not sacrileged or sacked. In Kharkov alone 70 priests have been killed after unspeakable tortures and sacrilegious mockery.

Below are some extracts from those protocols:

"... in the military baracks, in the schools, in the working houses and nursery homes the chapels were turned into theatres, cabarets, clubs, dancing palaces, cinemas etc. Ikons, chalices and other sacred objects were mocked at and thrown into dust-bins..." (Kharkov).

"Sailor Dybenko with his comrades and paramours entered the church with their hats on, smoked there, using bad language and blasphemies against Virgin Mary; they upset the altar, stole some of the sacred objects and pierced through with a knife the image of the Saviour. After their departure some excrements were found in the vestry..." (Station Borki).

"The eyes on the ikon of the Saviour have been pierced through; instead of the ikons the names of Lenin, Trotzky and other commissaries were inscribed on the walls. In the altar and on the library shelves human excrements were found" (Poltava, Ecclesiastical Seminary).

"Five monks' corpses were found near the ikon which stood in a pool of blood... The monks were made to smoke, to dance, even to drink the ink... One of the communists put on a robe and a mitre, climbed on the altar and began to peruse the Gospels, while the

others, also clad in robes, imitated the service accompanying it with indecent songs..." (Sviatogorsk, Uspensky Convent).

"Having stolen the canonical robes the sacrilegists turned them up and put on; filling the censer with tobacco they lit it up and began a mock service..." (Kamenskaya Station).

"Having put on the canonical robes and taken the crosses, the censers and the Gospels, they [a band of communists], went to the cells of the Extraordinary Commission. There they beat the prisoners with sacred objects, swearing and blaspheming at the same time..." (Lugansk.)

"In the local church a "wedding of a priest with a mare" was arranged by the bolsheviks. A cross was held to the lips of the horse, which was brought into the church, so that the animal should be able to kiss it. An orchestra played in the meantime. After the ceremony "the newly married priest" was led off to be shot".. (The station Mikulinskaya, the Don region.) (N. 18.)

As an example of the documents collected by the representatives of the foreign European missions may serve the Acts of the Examinations, taken down in Siberia in 1919, when the Siberian Army under the command of Admiral Koltchak delivered the provinces of Perm and Ufa from the bolsheviks. The represen-

tatives of the French and English missions, following immediately in the footseps of the retreating bolsheviks, collected all information they could of the deeds of the latter.

Of all the documents which had come in, one compiled by the French lieutenant, Adrien Souberbiel, is extracted as an example. It reads:

"10th February, 1919. Perm. I, a lieutenant of the French mission, Adrien Souberbiel, attached to the main Secretariat of the French Republic in Siberia, have questioned Naumov, the secretary of the Extraordinary Commission, who has made the following deposition:

"I am Paul Alexandrovitch Naumov, the ex-secretary of the General Department of the Perm Extraordinary Commission for fighting counter-revolution, speculation and sabotage.

"Formerly I had been a police officer, later I served in the war with Germany, and afterwards worked in an ammunition factory as an engineer. When the factory was closed, I handed a request to the commissary Malkov, with whom I was personally acquainted, and he gave me the situation of a clerk.

"The Extraordinary Commission was unofficially founded in 1918 under the leadership of the Commissary Malkov.

"Its task was the struggle with the anti-bolshevik elements.

"The Extraordinary Commission was subordinated to the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission in Moscow and represented a Department of the Provincial Soviet.

"Although the Extraordinary Commission of Perm was meant to be a Department of the Provincial Soviet, all its instructions came from Moscow. The Extraordinary Commission possessed the full authority. It acted of its own accord, and could in case of necessity arrest the chief commissaries. The president of the Commission was Paul Alexandrovitch Malkov, aged 25, a member of the Provincial Soviet. Before the bolsheviks he had been a worker on the gun factory of Perm. Malkov had received but a preliminary education and could hardly read or write. At the head of the Department which dealt with counter-revolution and sabotage stood Gregory Vorobtzov, aged 20, formerly a metal worker. He also could hardly read or write . . .

". . . Executions took place on the premises of the Commission, as well as in the woods and on the river Kama.

"No special order was required for an execution. If one of the commissaries wanted to execute some person, he wrote himself a resolution to that effect and sent it on to two of his colleagues, who added their signatures

without even looking into the matter. That was sufficient.

"I saw with my own eyes the books in which the cases had to be written down. During the period of 8 months not more than 10 cases were registered whereas 150 people were actually executed by December 1st 1919 in Perm, and 400 in the district...

"The corpses of the executed people remained on the premises of the Commission for several days; then dung was cast over them and they were taken out of the town in motor lorries.

"Personally I have never been present at an execution, but I heard much about them from the commissaries who freely and often referred to the subject.

"In June an order was received from Sverdlov to take hostages, chiefly from among the industry owners, members of the Cadet and the Menshevik parties and clergy. A great number of hostages were taken, but I do not think many of them escaped death. When the Bishop Andronicus was taken, Malkov himself told me that he was shot the very same night. Yet to all enquiries as to his fate it was told that he was in a safe place. When the copy of an enquiry of Patriarch Tikhon was received from the Commissariat of Justice, Malkov told me to put it into a drawer. After

a time I asked him how to reply to that enquiry; he told me to write that the bishop had been banished to the province of Archangel, which was at that time already occupied by the English and French troops...

"... Vorobtzov was full of hatred against the clergy. He used to call them "black ravens". I affirm that many priests and monks have been shot by him.

"At the time of the evacuation I went away with our chancery, but I fled from the station XX., crossed the battle front on January 1st 1919 at XX, and appeared before the military Chief of XX who sent me to Perm.

"All the above stated I confirm with my signature:

(Signature) (N. 19.)

At the same time, as it follows from the telegram published in the Paris paper "La Cause Commune" and dated Omsk, March 20th:

"The bishop of Perm has published a list containing the names of 42 representatives of the Orthodox Church who have been tortured and shot by the bolsheviks." (N. 20.)

As an example of the documents referring to the North Russia we give below the protest of the "Union of Clergy and Laymen of Archangel." It was handed to the Provincial Government of Northern Russia with the request to convey it to the Peace Conference of

Versailles. It is almost the only instance of protest emanating from the terrorised Russian clergy itself. It runs as follows:

> "Having usurped the power, the Government of the People's Commissaries not only closes the churches, but turns them into tea-rooms, military barracks and even cinemas; orgies and feasts are being held in the churches. The priests are subjected to tortures. In the Northern region, in the Pinega Kray, a priest of the name of Shangin was killed and his body was cut into pieces; in Petchora the archpriest Surtzev was beaten for several days on end, then he was shot and his body was thrown into the river. In the same place an old priest, Rasputin, was tied to a telegraph stay and shot, his body was given to the dogs. In the parish of Seletzk the psalmist of the name of Athanasius Smirnov was shot because he held a memorial service for a dead French soldier.
>
> "The Union requests the Government to appeal to the Peace Conference asking it to put an end to the shameless and terrible activities of the Bolsheviks directed against Christian religion." (N. 21.)

Parallel with the arbitrary executions at the hands of Extraordinary Commissions some public trials in revolutionary courts of clergymen accused of "counter-

revolutionary activities" are registered at the end of 1918. The newspaper called "The Banner of the Labour Commune" in its issue of October 10th 1918 gives the description of one of the first of such trials, that of Father Smirnov who was accused of anti-Soviet propaganda.

> "The Court sentenced Smirnov to 19 years of hard labour." (N. 22.)

The following information taken from the Paris papers of December 8th 1920 shows that already towards the end of 1920 the position of the clergy in Russia had become quite unbearable. It reads:

> "Copenhagen, December 5th. — It is reported from Kirkenös (on the northern frontier of Norway) that a party of monks from the monastery of Petchenga has arrived here. They fled from the persecutions of the bolsheviks. Most of them are over 40 years of age. According to them the bolsheviks are mobilising all the men in the region making them enlist in the Red Army. Those who refuse are shot on the spot. The monastery of Petchenga has become the centre of bloody executions." (N. 23.)

At about the same time the Orthodox clergy abroad makes the first attempt to appeal to the European Governments.

> "The Conference of the Orthodox clergy in Latvia, which took place on November 24th

appealed to all the Governments of the world for international help to the perishing population of Russia and protested against inhuman executions.

That resolution was handed over to the representatives of the European Governments in Riga." (N. 24.)

However, that was of no consequence. Having overcome the White armies and stabilised its position in Europe by a series of commercial agreements, the Soviet Government did not stop its struggle against the Church. On the contrary, the reprisals increased and became more systematical. The Government was obviously seeking some pretext for the declaration of an open war against religion.

This appeared the more important to it, since in the result of the persecutions the prestige of the Orthodox clergy has greatly augmented among the parishioners. Not only the peasants, but the workers and the Red Army soldiers as well, defended the Church. The accusations of counter-revolutionary activities brought forth against the clergy were not convincing for the mass of population.

CHAPTER III.

Terror and persecutions of the clergy. Confiscation of the Church valuables.

Finally, in the beginning of 1922 the Government found the pretext it was looking for. The famine was at its worst and voices were raised in favour of the requisition of the Church valuables for the needs of the famine relief.[1]) As it is known, the Patriarch did not object against that proposal demanding only that the clergy should have its share in the control of the

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[1]) This propaganda was started by the Moscow "Pravda" in its issue of February 5th 1922. To the article which dealt with the question was added the following editorial post-scriptum:

"The Editor shares entirely the view of the author of the above article and requests the readers, especially those peasants, workers and soldiers who regard themselves as believers, to give an opinion on the question, collectively or individually, and send it to him."

The replies composed with the assistance of the communist agents, began to come in on February 11th, but only on February 28th after those preliminary preparations the Government published its official instruction as to the "requisition of the Church valuables".

expenditure of the proceeds. The government rejected that demand. Those priests who opposed the requisition were brought to trial. In many places bloody collisions occurred between the population and the government agents. From the long lists of them we will quote the following.

"Izvestia" of Moscow report in the issue of March 28th:

> "The District Executive Committee of Shuya organised a special commission to deal with the requisition of ecclesiastical treasures. Monday, March 13th, was appointed as the day of requisition in the Cathedral of Shuya. The Commission arrived at the spot at noon, after the service. It was met with hostile shouts of the crowd. Wishing to avoid a collision, the Commission decided to postpone its work till Wednesday and quitted the Church. When it was leaving some swears were uttered by the crowd, and the members of the Commission received several kicks and blows. On Wednesday, March 15 th, a large crowd began to assemble in the Cathedral square before the service. It consisted mainly of women and youth. The detachment of mounted militia was stoned as soon as it approached. The tocsin resounded from the belfry of the Church and lasted an hour and a half, attracting an enormous crowd. A detachment of infantry and two lorries with machine guns were ordered to

the spot. They were met by a gale of stones and revolver shots. Four soldiers were swept away by the crowd and severely injured. After the first volley in the air, the second was charged at the crowd. 4 people were killed and 10 seriously injured after which the crowd dispersed. In the evening many arrests were made and the Commission continued to work. 3 poods of silver were requisitioned." (N. 25.)

Similar occurences took place in Rostov-on-Don, where

"on March 11th Secretary of the Commission for Requisition of ecclesiastical treasures, comrade Skliarsky, came to the Executive Committee and declared that the Commission having started its work in the Cathedral (in the old market place) had been attacked by the mob. The latter tried to get over the railings, to the place where the members of the Commission were at the moment, obviously intending to massacre them..." (N. 26.)

In Smolensk the requisition of the Church treasures was fixed for March 28th. That is how the "Izvestia" describe it:

"A crowd, consisting of five thousand people, attracted by the tocsin that was rung in all the churches simultaneously, tried to break through the detachment of cadets. The

crowd dispersed only after a machine gun charge in the air." (N. 27.)

"The "Red Gazette" of March 23rd reports that a great excitement is observed in Petrograd in connection with the requisition of the Church treasures. On March 15th a large crowd consisting mainly of women prevented the spoliation of the Kazan Cathedral. The day after, the spoliation of the Spasskaia Church in the Sennaia Place was also prevented by the crowd... Now and then the rumour is spread that the bolsheviks are going to plunder the Alexandro-Nevskaia Lavra. Crowds of people assemble for its defence. The "Red Gazette" tries to make out that the excitement and the indignation of the mass are due to the 'reactionary propaganda of the clergy'." (N. 28.)

The same events are in the following way described in a private letter published in the Russian paper "Za Svobodu" appearing in Warsaw. The letter was sent from Petrograd on March 9th.

"On Friday, March 17th, a motor lorry in which were seated a Commissary with some armed soldiers stopped in front of the Church in the Sennaia Place. They came to confiscate the church treasures. The crowd that was in the place got at once the tidings and decided to defend the Church. The Commissary who

persisted in his intention, was beaten by the crowd. Consequently the place was encircled by a detachment of mounted militia and red cadets. Several charges were made into the air, but the crowd did not disperse and the communists for once had to abandon their intention.

"In the same night the Kazan Cathedral was plundered. The news spread at once all over Petrograd and provoked a great indignation. The people said openly that the confiscated treasures would be utilised not for the famine relief but for the Red Army and for the bolshevik propaganda abroad." (N. 29.)

Similar occurrences took place in various other towns and villages. Demanding in the Moscow "Pravda" the resignation of the Patriarch, Krasnitzky (one of the leaders of the "Living Church") declared that

"1414 bloody excesses were registered on the spots." (N. 30.)

The same "Pravda" thus describes the atmosphere in which the agents of the Government had to work in those days:

"... People spat at them, stoned them, pierced their eyes, threw them off horses and trampled upon them. They were met with shouts like: "The red rabble", "The red gen-

darmes"; the worst swearing words were applied to them." (N. 31.)

During the requisition in the cathedral of Rostov "people cried... Some sung the psalms. Some got fits of hysterics." (N. 32.)

At the same time the general assemblies of parishioners carried out resolutions against the requisitions suggesting that money should be taken instead. As an instance of those resolutions may serve the following report of the meeting of the parishioners of the Church of St. Ermoly (about 200 people) published by "Pravda":

"All who spoke protested against the requisition; it was proposed that money should be taken instead. A resolution to that effect was carried out unanimously." (N. 33.)

Having found a pretext the Soviet Government started overtly a campaign against the Church and its servitors. The Soviet papers began openly to incite the Extraordinary Commission against the Patriarch and the bishops. The "Pravda" put forward the following demands:

"Let them answer for the loss of these treasures before the revolutionary tribunal, just as the murderers do.

"Let the punishment be speedy and ruthless." (N. 34.)

Thus began the period of foul denunciations of the clergy in the official press which usually led to the worst consequences.

"Izvestia" of March 28th 1922 (Nr. 70) published the following list of "the enemies of the people":

1. Patriarch Tikhon "with the whole of his Church Council."
2. Bishop Laurence of Nijny Novgorod.
3. Metropolitan Jacob of Kazan.
4. Bishop Andrew of Ufa.
5. Bishop George of Minsk.
6. Metropolitan Anthony.
7. Archbishop Eulogius.
8. The Siberian Clerical Conference. (19 bishops, 50 archimandrites and many priests and monks.)
9. The monks of the Spassky monastery (Province of Jaroslav.)
10. The priests and monks of Rostov.
11. Metropolitan Platon.
12. Bishop Sylvester of Omsk.
13. The clergy of Archangel.
14. Metropolitan Hermogene.
15. Metropolitan Makarius.
16. Bishop Nestor.
17. Father Sergius } In Kronstadt in the
18. Father Putilin } days of mutiny.
19. Members of the Ecclesiastical Council of Karlovatz. (N. 34a.)

N. 51 of "Pravda" contains a denunciation of Bishop Arseny of Rostov and Taganrog.[1])

N. 52 — a denunciation of Euphimy, the bishop of Olonetz.

N. 57 — of the rector of the Semivselensky Cathedral in Moscow.

N. 73 — of Metropolitan Benjamin and the Roman Catholic clergy, etc., etc., etc. (N. 35.)

The orgy of arrests among the clergy had reached its climax.

The following extracts from the short list of trials are characteristic of this period of persecutions:

> "M o s c o w, 11. V. — Yesterday the papers published the verdict of the court in the case of persons accused of propaganda against the confiscation of church valuables. 12 people have been sentenced to death; 4 — to 5 years', 13 — to 3 years' and 10 to 1 years' imprisonment. It is said that the total number of accused amounts to 54, of whom 20 belong to the higher clergy." (N. 36.)

The official text of the verdict, published in the "Pravda" begins thus:

> "The Court has passed the sentence of capital punishment upon the priests Zaosersky, Dobroliubov, Nadejdin, Christoforov, Vishniakov, Orlov, Friasinov, Sokolov, Teliegin, as

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[1]) Who was later arrested and condemned.

well as upon the citizens Broussilova,[1]) Tikhomirov and Rakhanov." (N. 37.)

In the same issue of "Pravda" we read about the preparations for a new trial to be heard in the Petrograd Tribunal in connection with the confiscation of the Church valuables. Among the accused we find the names of Professor Liapunov, of the Musical Conservatory; of Fathers Tolstopiatov and Nikolsky (of the Volkov cemetery), of a former gentleman Kalibinsky, of the accountant Peshel and two others.

Similar occurrences are reported in the following telegrams:

"R o s t o v o n D o n, 11. V. — The revolutionary tribunal in its last session sentenced the vicar of the episcopal Church Father Kravtzov for concealing the Church valuables." (N. 38.)

"T i u m e n, 12. V. — The bishop has been arrested and brought to trial on the accusation of an attempt to resist the confiscation." (N. 39.)

"K h a r k o v, 13. V. — Several cases of concealing the valuables have been discovered in the districts. The guilty priests have been brought to trial." (N. 40.)

"N o v g o r o d, 15. V. — 22 people were accused of participation in the disorders in Staraia Russa. The Court has sentenced two

[1]) The daughter in law of General Broussilov.

priests and one tradesman to death. Three men have been acquitted and the rest sentenced to various periods of imprisonment. At the same time the Court has passed a resolution demanding the prosecution of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Arseny of Novgorod and Bishop Demetrius of Staraia Russa." (N. 41.)

"Rostov on Don, 11. V. — Various cases of concealing ecclesiastical treasures have been recently heard by the revolutionary tribunal of the Don Region." (N. 42.)

"Rostov on Don, 15. V. — The trial of the priest, deacon and churchwardens of the Alexander Church in Novotcherkassk, accused of stealing the valuables, has been brought to an end.[1])" (N. 43.)

"Kharkov, 16. V. — By the order of the Department of Justice in Kiev Archimandrite Tikhon, Father Seraphim and a monk Innocens have been arrested on the charge of concealing the valuables from St. Michael Monastery." (N. 44.)

"The archbishop of Irkutsk has been arrested on the charge of concealing the valuables." (N. 45.)

"Smolensk, 17. V. — Archbishop Philip of Smolensk has been arrested." (N. 46.)

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[1]) No report as to the verdict has transpired in the press.

"T c h e r n i g o v, 17. V. — The revolutionary tribunal of Nejin has sentenced to hard labour the churchwarden Tverdovsky, the Reverend Mother of the Vvedensky Convent — Onistchenko, the priest Verbitsky and the sexton Shabanov. They were accused of hiding the Church treasures in the apartment of Tverdovsky." (N. 47.)

"V i t e b s k, 18. V. — Father Truskovsky, a Roman Catholic priest and a former gentleman, has been sentenced by the tribunal to five years imprisonment for resisting the confiscation." (N. 48.)

The "Red Gazette" reports on May 21st that Metropolitan Benjamin has been forced to promise that

"he will not leave Petrograd until the trial is over." (N. 49.)

According to "Izvestia" 40 charges against clergy and laymen (in total 150 persons) are awaiting the hearing of the Petrograd revolutionary tribunal. (N. 50.)

The terror was growing every day. The will to resistance in the population was almost paralysed, not speaking of the clergy who continued to bear their cross patiently.

Mockery and unheard-of blasphemy, imprisonments, banishments and executions succeeded in turn to each other.

Towards the end of May the persecutions have reached such a point that they attracted the attention of the European public opinion.

The lead was given by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who came forward with the following declaration:

> "The Archbishop of Canterbury asked whether the Government could give any information respecting the alleged arrest of the Patriarch of the Russian Church and the threatened execution of bishops and priests. A week ago he received a letter, dated Berlin, May 11th, from the Metropolitan Eulogius, who looked after the congregations of Russians in Europe outside of Russia, in which he said:
>
> 'To-day's paper brought us the sad news of All Russia's Patriarch Tikhon's arrest by the Moscow Soviet authorities, who will not fail undoubtedly to inflict on him the severest penalty. The only accusation brought against him is his obedience to a sense of duty in refusing to submit to the theft of Church property, of sacred vessels, and relics, and all needed for holy services. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we appeal to you and to all the episcopalian members of the Church of England to lift your voice in protest of this act of unheard of violence and illegality, directed against the highest representative of

the Russian clergy. We implore you to use your influence to alleviate as much as possible Patriarch Tikhon's undeserved chastisment.'

"He felt himself bound to make public the need, as it seemed to him, of the Russian Church for at least the sympathy of the Christians of Europe generally, and so that they might have knowledge of what was now taking place. The statement was being made, with brazen effrontery, that the Russian Church was now being punished because it had declined to help to relieve the famine-stricken people. The fact was that on three, if not four, separate occasions the Church had, in the fullest possible way, given an undertaking to raise larger sums than were likely to be raised in any other manner and to see that money was properly administered. Those offers had been absolutely refused by the Soviet authorities, the treasures of the Church had, in spite of the Patriarch's protests, been seized with, if the reports were to be believed, horrible roughness and violence, and the Patriarch himself had been arrested, even if he was not in danger of death. They, as Christians, could not look on unmoved at such a state of things as that. (Hear, Hear.)

"Lord Emmott, associating himself with what the Archbishop of Canterbury had said, appealed to the Government to give the most

emphatic warning to the Soviet Government that any extreme measure against either the Patriarch or the priests of the Russian Church would have the most deplorable results in regard to famine relief work in this country and also in regard to the wider question of general Russian reconstruction.

"Lord Weardale spoke of the difficulties, which the organisation with which he was connected had encountered in carrying out their relief work in Russia, and said that, in spite of all, their stores were arriving with much greater rapidity, than had formerly been the case, and their work was proceeding satisfactorily. (Hear, hear.)

"The Earl of Crawford, in reply, said the Soviet Government recently ordered a confiscation of church valuables, and this led to the riots in various parts of Russia. So far as the Government were aware these riots were spontaneous outbreaks, and there was no evidence to show that they formed part of a conspiracy for which either the Patriarch or church were responsible. A number of priests had been sentenced to death, but the sentences had not been carried out yet. The Patriarch in his defence maintained that as head of the church he should have some control over the matter. It was not correct that the Patriarch had resigned his office.

"The Marquess of Salisbury: Is the Government going to take any steps to make representations to the Russian Government in the matter.

"The Earl of Crawford: If the Foreign Office had thought that representations would have been profitable, I should have made the announcement." (N. 51.)

The Archbishop of Canterbury and York, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and the Presidents of the Unions and Conferences of the principal nonconformist bodies in England and Wales have addressed the following telegram to Lenin:

"In the name of the Christian Communions which we represent we desire to protest most earnestly against the attack on the Russian Church in the person of its Patriarch Tikhon.

"The public mind and the conscience of Christiandom, and indeed of the whole civilized world, cannot tolerate silently so great a wrong." (N. 52.)

The Archbishop of Canterbury proposed that a small body of representatives of the various English Churches should visit Russia. This proposal arose out of the protest concerning the treatment of the Patriarch Tikhon.

In reply M. Krassin forwarded to the Archbishop the following communication from his Government:

"The protest addressed to the Soviet Government by a number of Churchmen of Great Britain in connexion with the proceedings instituted against Patriarch Tikhon calls for the following elucidations:

1) "In spite of the statement contained in the protest, there have been no attack on the Church. Only proceedings have been instituted against individual representatives of the Church, including its former Patriarch, in connexion with the resistance organized by them against measures of the Soviet authorities, which measures were taken in order to save the lives of tens of millions of human beings, including children.

2) "In the conflict between Patriarch Tikhon and the Soviet Power, the vast majority of the clergy sides with the Soviet Power and the labouring masses it represents. Only an insignificant number of the clergy — those who were the most privileged and demoralized through their connexion with the Tsarist nobility and with the Capital — form the group of the Patriarch Tikhon. Public opinion in Russia takes note that the protesting English Churchmen express their solidarity not with the starving labouring masses of Russia, nor even with the majority of the clergy, but with an insignificant number of Churchmen who have always been working

hand in hand with the Tsars, with the Bureaucracy, and with the nobility, and who have now entered into an open opposition to the power of the workers and peasants.

3) "Public opinion in Russia also notes that at its most inhuman period of the blockade, in which blockade the British Government took part, the authors of the protest did not raise their voices against the strangling of Russian workers, peasants, and children. The people of Russia has not heard that the signatories of the appeal protested against the attempts to strangle with the noose of usury the labouring masses of Russia.

4) "The Soviet Power, as well as the labouring masses, consider the above protest of the hierarchy of the various Churches of Great Britain to be dictated by a narrow caste solidarity because it is entirely directed against the real interests of the people, and against the elementary demands of humanity."

To this communication the Archbishop, through his chaplain, sent the following reply:

"In reply to your communication of June 6-th on behalf of the Russian Soviet Government the Archbishop of Canterbury cannot withdraw any of the statements already made by him in the House of Lords on May 25-th, statements which were based upon first-hand

information from Russia. The first-hand information in the Archbishop's possession particularly emphasizes the fact that the Patriarch of the Russian Church has repeatedly offered the help of the Church for the relief of the famine and that these offers have been consistently refused by the Soviet Government.

"But in view of the explicit dementi issued by the Soviet Government the Archbishop feels it incumbent upon him to request that permission be given to a small body of representatives of the various Churches in this country to go to Russia to examine situation on the spot, in order to avoid in future misunderstandings." (N. 53.)

M. Karakhan, Assistant Commissary for Foreign Affairs, writing on July to the Archbishop's chaplain, said:

"In reply to your communication of June 7th, on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury, I beg to inform you that my Government does not see any grounds for insisting upon the withdrawal of the statements made by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the House of Lords on May 25th since these statements clearly emanate from sources which in the eyes of the labouring masses of Russia and the whole world, do not merit any con-

fidence. They merely serve to illustrate the class solidarity of the "princes" of the various Churches, which solidarity is known to be directed against the labouring masses.

"The suggestion made by the Archbishop of Canterbury to send to Russia a body of "representation of the various Churches" in order to investigate the situation on the spot, constitutes a claim even less justifiable than would be a suggestion made by the Soviet Government to send to England a small Commission to investigate to what extent the labouring masses are exploited materially and spiritually by the hierarchy of the various English Churches in order to maintain the domination of the exploiting classes." (N. 53a.)

This letter was forwarded on Saturday by M. Klishko, of the Russian Trade Delegation in London. In acknowledging its receipt the Primate's chaplain said he was directed to send the enclosed memorandum:

"The Archbishop of Canterbury has considered carefully the communication transmitted to him in reply to his request, made on June 7th, that a small body of representatives of the various Churches responsible for the remonstrance of May 31st might be permitted by the Soviet Government to visit Russia. The purpose of such delegation would be to ascer-

tain the particulars of the reported action by the Soviet Government which gave rise to the remonstrance.

"The reply now received refusing this request does not, as the Archbishop notes, challenge the statement made as to the arrest and persecution of leading clergy of the Russian Church, nor does it elucidate the obvious contradiction between the detailed account of these arrests and persecutions given at the first hand to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the account given on behalf of the Soviet Government.

"The allegation that the representatives of the Church of England and of the other Christian denominations who signed the protest were actuated by political or class consideration is devoid of foundation. They were actuated simply by elementary considerations of humanity and of Christian feeling.

"The Archbishop deplores the refusal of the Soviet Government to allow this information to be obtained. Very many people in Great Britain are anxious to promote the friendliest relations between the Russian people at large and the peoples of the English-speaking countries, and the letters which the Archbishop receives from America show a similar desire. The present action of the Soviet Government is calculated to retard or prevent

the realisation of such a hope. If the announcement published during the last few days respecting the death sentence passed upon religious leaders in Russia proves to be well founded, the effect will be one of indignation and horror among civilized people of all classes." (N. 54.)

This memorandum was dated July 10th 1922.

However, the reaction of the European public opinion did not influence in the least the state of things in Russia.

The lists of trials and sacrileges registered in the official press continued to grow. Of those we will give below but a few examples:

"P e t r o g r a d. — The trial of churchmen is over. Eleven persons including Metropolitan Benjamin of Petrograd, Bishop Benedict of Kronstadt, Archbishop Sergius, Professor Ognev, Professor Novitzky, rector of the Kazan Cathedral Chucov, rector of the Troitzky (Trinity) Cathedral Cheltzov and rector of St. Isaac Cathedral Bogoiavlensky have been sentenced to death. 22 have been acquitted and 59 sentenced to imprisonment. The Tribunal has decided to bring an action against Patriarch Tikhon." (N. 55.)

"I r k u t s k, 15. VII. — Archbishop Anatoly of Irkutsk and Upper Lena and the former churchwarden Stefanovsky have been

sentenced to death on the charge of concealing Church valuables and taking part in counter-revolutionary activities." (N. 56.)

"T u l a. — Bishop Iuvenalius, Father Uspensky and others have been brought to trial. They are accused of officiating before the ikon which was found on the belfry of the Kazan Church. Bishop Iuvenalius has been sentenced to 16 years and the others to 5 years of imprisonment, in strict isolation." (N. 57.)

"G o m e l. — The revolutionary tribunal of Gomel has just concluded the hearing of the case of 11 Jewish clericals with Rabbi Baryshansky at their head. The latter has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment, the others to shorter periods, four of them only conditionally." (N. 58.)

"R y b i n s k, 25. VII. — Bishop Boris of Rybinsk has been sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment, Bishop Seraphim of Uglitch — to 3 years, Father Vsiekhsviatsky — to 5 years." (N. 59.)

"K h a r k o v, 18. VIII. — The trial of 77 clergymen in Balta has been brought to an end. The accused have been sentenced to 5 years of imprisonment. The amnesty will not be applied to them." (N. 60.)

"M o s c o w, 23. VIII. — The delegation of the conference of the "Living Church

handed to Kalinin two petitions: 1) to reprieve Bishop Anthony of Irkutsk, who has been condemned to death, and 2) to release Father Smirnov of Jaroslavl." (N. 61.)

"K h a r k o v, 22. VIII. — In Krolevetz, in the province of Tchernigov, a big trial of the clergy and the monks of Rychlovsky monastery has been brought to an end. The severest penalty, i. e. death, has been applied to the prior of the monastery and to Father Rodtchenko. At the same time it has been decided to abolish forever the monastery as the nest of counter-revolutionaries and to hand over the objects of service to other Church Communities." (N. 62.)

"R o s t o v o n D o n. — The sentence of death-penalty has been passed on Bishop Arseny by the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Don Region, but was substituted by 10 years' imprisonment." (N. 63.)

"K h a r k o v, 27. XI. — The trial of Bishop Zenobius, Father Pospielov and others lasted only 4 days. Pospielov has been sentenced to 7 years, bishop Zenobius to 6 years, Kamenev and Kudriashev to 4 years and Vissonov to 3 years of imprisonment. The amnesty was applied to all the accused and the period of imprisonment reduced by ⅓ and in the case of Vissonov, as belonging to the labouring class, by one half." (N. 64.)

"Simferopol, 4. XII. — Yesterday the revolutionary tribunal of the Crimea passed its sentence upon 73 clergymen. Archbishop Nicodemus was sentenced to 8 years of imprisonment in strict isolation, Toltchanov to 5 years, 7 persons to 3 years. 37 accused were acquitted, others, including Bishop Sergius sentenced to various punishments, conditionally." (N. 65.)

"Moscow. — On November 27-th at 7 p. m. in the Moscow Tribunal began the trial of 118 persons accused of resisting the confiscation of the Church valuables and conducting counter-revolutionary propaganda. Among the accused are Father Uspensky, Reverend Mother Pobiedinskaia, Fathers Revtchinsky, Palladin, member of the Parish Council Danilevsky, assistant lecturer at the Archeological Institute Uspensky, Father Sokolov, deacon Raevsky from Krivushi and others." (N. 66.)

On December 13-th, at 7 a. m. the verdict was given in the above case:

"Reverend Mother Pobiedinskaia, Father Khotovitsky and Father Uspensky have been sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment on the ground of clauses 62 and 119.

"The accused Bielevitch-Stankevitch, Bogoiavlensky, Milovsky and Master of Archeo-

logy Uspensky — to 8 years of imprisonment on the ground of the same clauses.

"16 people have been sentenced to 5 years of imprisonment, amongst them Father Arseniev (of the Saviour Church), Father Znamensky, Kedrov, Rojdestvensky, preacher Slavotzky, Professor of the Agricultural Academy Borstch, former Deputy Minister in the Kerensky Cabinet Stchepkin, and the members of the Parish Council of the Saviour Church — Golovkin and Kaiutov.

"Professor Tursky (of the Agricultural Academy) and Father Artabalevsky have been sentenced to 3 years of imprisonment, Professor of Canonical Law Gromoglassov — to 18 months . . . 31 people have been acquitted. The amnesty has been applied to all the accused with the exception of 23 people to whom clause 62 was incriminated." (N. 67.)

Not only individual clergymen, but the whole Church chapters are sometimes being put to trial. Thus:

"In Tula the tribunal has sentenced the chapter of the Kazanskaia church, consisting of three persons, to 3 years' imprisonment for having resisted the confiscation." (N. 68.)

"In Biejetzk, in the province of Briansk, 9 persons belonging to the church chapter have been arrested and put to trial." (N. 69.)

It would be useless as well as impossible to continue the enumeration of similar cases.[1])

The above instances suffice to demonstrate the character and the dimensions of the persecutions of the Church in this period. The non-Orthodox clergy was also affected by them though to a smaller degree. The following may serve as examples.

> "Lvov, 2. V. — In consequence of the decree refferring to the confiscation of the Church valuables, the bolsheviks have plundered the Roman Catholic church in Kamenetz. The valuables were heaped up in a pile in the yard. A crowd of parishioners came and began to take them. To disperse the crowd three detachments of Kossacks were ordered to the spot, but were unable do anything. Only the bayonets of the Red Army proved to be of some avail. Among the arrested was the Deputy-Bishop of Kamenetz-Podolsk, Prince Nedzielsky." (N. 70.)

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[1]) We do not reproduce in this book the numerous reports of such trials that appeared in the European Press, but were not registered by the communist papers. The latter obviously mentioned but an insignificant number. Therefore in the above short list compiled exclusively from the data supplied by the official publications some of the most important trials of persons belonging to the highest clergy have been omitted (e. g. of Archbishop Agapite and Bishop Averky (Jitomir), Bishops Paulinus (Rylsk), Sophronius (Zabaikalie), Nicodemus (Simferopol), Archbishop Gregory (Ekaterinburg).

"M i n s k, 3. V. — The confiscation in the Roman Catholic churches was fixed for May 2nd. The priests refused to give up the keys and to present themselves at the confiscation. Two of them, Lissovsky and Vassilevsky, have been arrested. Their case will be shortly heard in the tribunal. On the same evening the Polish commissary of repatriation was arrested on the charge of conducting counter-revolutionary agitation in the church and calling the confiscation — robbery." (N. 71.)

Lissovsky, Vassilevsky and Tomashevsky were sentenced to 3 and 5 years' imprisonment.

The Jewish clergy also had to suffer:

"The revolutionary tribunal of Odessa has sentenced Rabbi Gurovitch to 2 years of imprisonment and 300 million roubles fine for insulting the commission dealing with the confiscation." (N. 72.)

The main features accompanying those trials were 1) the fierce demands of the official communist press for the "severest penalty", demands that were published while the trials were still going on; and 2) the extremly hard position into which was put the defence.

During the May trials the Communist "Pravda" of Moscow wrote:

"... Let the wirepullers of the Church policy bear the whole burden of revolutionary justice: they deserve it!"

And then:

> "... It will be a great scorn if the tribunal lets off lightly the enemies of the people. In any case we demand that the supreme penalty should be inflicted upon the ideological instigators of the resistance, priests Vyshniakov, Sokolov and Nadejdin." (N. 73.)

And again in connection with the trial of the Smolensk clergy and laymen:

> "We hope that the Supreme Tribunal will duly punish the organisers of the mutiny."[1]) (N. 74.)

The worthy attitude taken by the accused and by the witnesses is also an object of mockery in the official press. When Patriarch Tikhon was summoned as a witness in the case of 54 priests (see No. 36) "Pravda" wrote scornfully:

> "The Patriarch has been summoned to make a legal deposition. He has been called to the red table where three atheists are sitting in judgment. Still worse: he, the Patriarch of all Russia, is being brought to trial, as a simple citizen Bielavin, on the charge of spreading counter-revolutionary proclamations. Isn't it something unheard of?

[1]) In the same number of "Pravda" it was pointed out that the local clergy was holding aloof all the time and did not even attend the meetings. Yet the accusation of having organised the "mutiny" has been profezzed against it.

"The Politechnic Museum, where the Patriarch gave his deposition in the case of 54 priests, was overcrowded... The Patriarch behaved haughtily throughout the proceedings, smiling at the naive impertinence of the young judges. His whole attitude was marked with self-respect. But we will join the Moscow tribunal in its coarse blasphemy and add one more question to the legal questions already put:

"Where does that self-respect come from?" (N. 75.)

In many cases there was brought against the clergy the charge of not only concealing the valuables, but of robbing the churches. It is hardly conceivable, however, that under the existing system of espionage and frequent denonciations, it would be possible for anyone but the Government agents, or the criminals with the knowledge of the authorities, to conceal or steal anything from the churches.[1])

The following reports taken from the official press may serve as examples of suchlike cases:

"K a z a n, 10. IV. — On April 4-th the Commission of Confiscation discovered that many valuables were missing in the Grusin-

[1]) There are but a few cases as to which there is no doubt that the clergy did try to save the most revered sacred relics. On the other hand several cases of robberies committed by the criminals and the accomplices of the Government have been documentally established. See N. 84.

skaia Church of Kazan. Some of the most precious stones, including three big diamond stars and two smaller ones, were missing from the ikon of Virgin Mary." (N. 76.)

"P e t r o g r a d, 21. IV. On April 19-th all the valuables have been stolen from the church of Dolorous Virgin." (N. 77.)

"K h a r k o v, 17. IV. — The Kiev provincial Commission of Confiscation examining the Mikhailovsky Monastery discovered that many of the most valuable objects were missing including a golden taper weighing 6 lb, diamonds, pearls and other things." (N. 78.)

"T a m b o v, 22. IV. — Valuables have been stolen from the Eliah Cathedral in Kozlov. Several priests are being accused." (N. 79.)

"P i a t i g o r s k, 24. IV. — All gold and silver things have been stolen from the Cathedral of Georgievsk. The newspaper "Terek" demands the most strict investigation and throws suspicion upon 'ecclesiastical princes'." (N. 80.)

"V o r o n e j, 24. IV. — All the valuables in the Bogoiavlenskaia Church in the district of Ostrogojsk have disappeared. An investigation has been started. An action has been brought against the Church chapter." (N. 81.)

On April 24-th the Troitsky (Trinity) Cathedral in Petrograd, erected by Peter the Great, was robbed. It contained many things of great historical value. (N. 82.)

"R o s t o v - o n - D o n, 3. V. — All the most valuable objects have been stolen from the Convent at Novotcherkassk." (N. 83.)

"K h a r k o v, 6. V. — During the confiscation of valuables in the Preobrajenskaia Church in Poltava it has been discovered that several objects were missing." (N. 84.)

In spite of the categorical assertions of the communist press, that all those cases of robbery ought to be incriminated to the clergy, the following information taken from the same press points to other criminals:

"K h a r k o v, 4. V. — In the course of the last three months valuables have been stolen from various churches of Kharkov to the total amount of several milliard roubles. The robbers have been traced out. Various ecclesiastical objects, weighing 15 poods were found in their possession. They say that they have already sold a large amount of silver. 14 persons have been arrested. The case will be heard in the revolutionary tribunal." (N. 84a.)

At the same time in the European and white Russian emigré press there appeared following reports:

CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL of the PACIFIC LIBRARY

"Constantinople, 8. IV. — Ss. "Polyxene" and others have brought over Church valuables belonging to the Odessa section of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade. On the same evening the valuables were taken to the Russian antiquary shop in the Grande Rue de Pera.

"There appeared in the shop window in the midst of the portraits of the Allied High Commissioners the following articles: 12 ecclesiastical robes, censers, large silver urns and vases, rings, chains and cigarette holders with royal crowns, initials and monograms.

"All the shelves inside were filled with similar things, among which were also ikons..

"A crowd of Russian refugees assembled in front of the window. Some of them rushed in shouting "Shame! the blood of our relatives has stuck to your things! — It's a sacrilege", and so on. In view of the menacing attitude of the crowd, the proprietor had to hide the most offensive articles..." (N. 85.)

The "Slavbureau" reports:

"Lvov, 12. VI. — Recently all the jewellers of Lvov rushed to the Soviet frontier in order to buy the Church valuables which are being sent to Poland through Kamenetz and Proscurov. A gramm of gold is being sold

by the bolsheviks at half its market price." (N. 86.)

The Polish newspaper "Gazieta Podzienna" adds the following curious details to the information:

> "The Branch of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade in Oripin has received from Kamenetz-Podolsk a big cargo of church valuables including a large amount of gold, 40 golden chalices, 3 golden crosses from the Church banners, 10 golden plates, 20 lb. of silver in chalices and candleholders, 25 diamonds from the miraculous ikon of Virgin Mary in Kamenetz-Podolsk, many ikons etc. These valuables were sold by the bolshevik agents in Gussiatin and Scala." (N. 87.)

The Moscow "Pravda" reports a still more characteristic case of sacrilegious dealing with one of the most sacred and revered objects of service — the cover from the Holy Sepulchre. According to "Pravda":

> "The Communist Soviet of Kotielnitchi in order to fill up its cash has sold the sacred cloth from the Alexander Church, which was left after the confiscation together with other things in the local girls' school.
>
> "That incident has provoked a great indignation among the believers. The disorders which ensued had to be suppressed with armed force."

Even "Pravda" remarks:

> "The Soviet of Kotielnitchi selling a sacred cloth — that is really too much. They have gone too far in trying to overcome their financial difficulties." (N. 88.)

A telegram from Riga dated August 22nd reads:

> "In the course of the last month there appeared in the antiquary shops of Riga many church valuables brought over from Russia. Among them the general attention is drawn to the mitre ornamented with diamonds, to panagias, crosses, old ikons and robes." (N. 89.)

The newspapers of Kharbin report that

> "large quantities of valuables stolen from the churches have passed through the town to be sold to the Americans on the Chinese markets. Among them was the golden mitre of Metropolitan Philaret weighing several pounds and ornamented with diamonds, emeralds and other precious stones." (N. 90.)

"Novaia Russkaia Jizn" (of Helsingfors) reprints the information of the local Swedish paper to the effect that

> "several Finish smugglers have been detained on the ice near Terijokki. They came from Soviet Russia across the gulf, carrying several kilogramms of silver things, among which were church ornaments, candleholders etc." (N. 91.)

There are many similar reports. They give a quite satisfactory explanation of the surprise and regret expressed by the "Izvestia" at the insignificant amount of valuables handed over to the Famine Relief Committee, in spite of the repeated confiscations and of the fact that

> "those who concealed valuables were severely punished by the Soviet Government." (N. 92.)

Into what a state the churches were brought as a result of the confiscation, it may be seen from the picturesque description given by the correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt", a paper rather notorious for its leniency towards the Soviet Government. Its correspondent, Herr Paul Scheffer, thus described the "dead Kreml" in his December letter from Moscow:

> "The damage cannot be described by merely quoting the inventory list. What impresses one most deeply is the loss of the general picturesque effect of the internal decorations of these cathedrals, of their gentle and yet depressing mysteriousness. It is gone. Formerly, thousands of big and tiny candles used to shine here out of the darkness (only above, near the cupola, some light broke through). Their light shone and played reflections upon silver and gold, upon the rich cloths and dark faces of the saints, and the massive outlines of censers and the heavy splendour of the vestments.

"From the XVIII century on the custom was established to leave open only the faces, the hands and the feet of the saints and to cover all the rest with gold or silver; and it was mostly these dusky coats-of-mail on all walls and columns and at the altars, upon which the light of wax candles played its reflections, that filled the churches with solemn flowing life, which came no one knows where from... Now all these vestments have been removed... Even the silver badges from the brass cases which covered the tombs of the Patriarchs have been taken away. Brocade coverings are thrown in piles upon the floor or packed in boxes. All the tapers, censers and silver candleholders have been sent to be melted down. Only the gift of the Cossacks which they took back from the French who requisitioned it in 1812, — a massive candleholder in the Archangel Cathedral, weighing about 400 Kgms. — has been left. It has been spared, "as a specimen", that people might see what riches there used to be here. Some historical relics, of little value, have also been left. But the general impression is that of an appalling bareness. The silver shrine from the tomb of Metropolitan Peter which covered his image had been torn off and his head, hands and feet may be seen now on the dark wooden board to which a seal has been affixed. This

spectacle is nauseating. The bolsheviks have been more systematical and ruthless about the place than the French in 1812. Even all the sacred vessels have been removed, since in the Kreml Churches no services are held. The famous door with its golden carvings in the Cathedral of Annunciation has been left simply because it was impossible to remove it. But from the famous ikon of Saviour over that door, before which the false Demetrius had prayed, the silver garb has been torn off, and only a rough wooden plate may be seen, covered with something black and sticky, with but a faint outline of the head upon it. And such have become all the old ikons of the XIV th and XV th centuries." (N. 93.)

The last link in this chain of persecutions was the case of Metropolitan Benjamin of Petrograd who was condemned to death and shot. The European public opinion kept silent about it. After the publication of the verdict (See N. 55) the following official communique was published in the communist press:

"The department of Appeal of the Church Tribunal having examined the appeal of the Counsel for Defence saw no reason for revoking the verdict of the Petrograd Provincial Tribunal. The case went then into the Central Executive Committee which examined with great attention the petition for reprievement,

handed to it by the Supreme Ecclesiastical administration, by the new Metropolitan Nicholas, and by the clergy of Petrograd. The Central Executive Committee proved very gentle towards the majority of the accused, substituting with regard to six out of ten, viz. Archpriest Cheltzov, Bishop Benedict (Plotnikov), Archpriest Bogoiavlensky, Michael Ognev, Elatchitch and Archpriest Chukov, the death-penalty by long period of imprisonment. As to the remaining 4, viz. Metropolitan Benjamin, the Chairman of Orthodox Parishes Novitzky, former Nationalist member of the Duma Sergius Shein and former barrister-at-law Kovsharov, — the Central Executive Committee did not find it possible to mitigate the penalty, in view of their relations with the international counter-revolution." (N. 94.)

Then the following reports appeared in the European press:

1) "The correspondent of the "Riga Courrier" reports: "On September 2nd the rumour was spread in Petrograd that Metropolitan Benjamin has been executed. A crowd consisting mainly of women assembled in front of the prison in which the Metropolitan was kept. The agents of the State Political Department (formerly Extraordinary Commission) tried to disperse the crowd, but were

unable to do so. The numerous arrests did not frighten the crowd which demanded that the Metropolitan should be shown to them. Then the "tchekists" (the special police) resorted to shooting; the crowd at first fled away, but then returned and became still more persistent. The warden of the prison proposed to choose three people to whom he would show the Metropolitan. That was agreed to; the three deputies went to the prison and ascertained that the Metropolitan was really alive." (N. 95.)

2) "A certain Mr. Ch. who has just arrived from Petrograd reports the following details of the execution of Metropolitan Benjamin and his colleagues, Archimandrite Sergius Shein, a former member of the Imperial Duma, and Professor Novitzky, all of whom were condemned to death:

"Fearing the indignation which was provoked by the verdict among the working masses the bolsheviks dared not carry out the execution in Petrograd. They spread the rumour that the Metropolitan was being taken to Moscow, whereas actually he and two other martyrs — Archimandrite Shein and Professor Novitzky — were marched away to the station Porokhovyie to be executed there. They were all shaved and dressed in rags to make them unrecognizable.

"At the moment of the execution Metropolitan Benjamin fainted and he was shot while unconscious. Archimandrite Shein had the courage to address the executioners with a short allocution explaining to them that they had just shot Metropolitan Benjamin." (N. 96.)

CHAPTER IV.

The Ecclesiastical Cleavage.

The terror and the reprisals against the clergy, coupled with unbearable conditions of life caused by the total deprivation of civil rights, could not help influencing a part of the clergy. Already in the middle of 1922 the traces of a splitting began to be felt. Separate groups were formed, called "The Living Church", "The Group of Church Revival", "Free Labouring Church" etc.

It is not our aim to analyse here the causes and the meaning of the cleavage from the theological point of view. We merely want to show, who created the cleavage and what for.

In a circumstantial leaflet of communist J. Stepanov, entitled "The aims and the methods of antireligious propaganda", we read on page 28:

> "We cannot deprive ourselves of the pleasure to see the views of one part of the clergy opposed to those of the other. But we cannot

stop at that and will make use of the splitting among the clergy in order to lead the masses away from any religion whatever." (N. 97.)

Still more straightforward is antireligious propagandist J. Okunev when he writes in No 2 of the atheistic magazine "The Godless":

> "What is the attitude of the Soviet Government towards the ecclesiastical cleavage? The latter is to the advantage of the workers' and peasants' Government for it weakens its enemies and facilitates the victory of the revolution. The Soviet Government does not support either the old, or the 'living' Church, but nor does it stand in the way of their dissolution. If the Church would turn to us asking to assist it in the process of dissolution, we should willingly do so." (N. 98.)

That is, then, the task of the day, in its general outline. In order to carry it out successfully it was necessary not only to terrorise the active part of the clergy, of which speak the above described trials and executions, but to put the clergy as such in an unheard-of position.

The following repressive measures were carried out by way of governmental instructions: 1) legal restrictions of the clergy, 2) military conscription of the clergy, 3) compulsary labour, 4) expulsion

from the Church houses and sequestration of income, including in some cases the wages received for hard manual labour.

Let us look at those methods seriatim:

A) Legal restrictions.

In the official publication of the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice (which deals with ecclesiastical affairs), entitled "The revolution and the Church", we read:

> "The V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice has declared in the reply to the enquiry of Centrosious of June 4-th 1921, s. N 22740:
>
> "According to the Constitution of the R. S. F. S. R. the ministers of religious worship are included in the category of persons deprived of electoral rights" (12/12/21, s. N 777). (N. 99.)

In the same place we read under the heading "Concerning the civil rights of the clergy":

> "In reply to the enquiry made by citizen Zorin of the Province of Riazan concerning the civil rights of the Orthodox Church, the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice informed him that all ministers of religious worship, as persons engaged in non-productive labour and not living upon labour wages, according to the general trend of the workers'

and peasants' legislation are not entitled to enjoy full civil rights on equal terms with the working population of the Republic. (April 14-th 1920, s. N 271.)" (N. 100.)

The same publication mentions the cases of deprivation of civil rights applied by the local authorities even to the former clergymen who not being able to stand all the persecutions and reprisals had divested themselves of the clerical habits. Thus:

"The former deacon in the Province of Viatka, of the name Vershinin, reported to the Commissariat of Justice that during the election to the local cooperative society he was deprived of electoral rights on the plea of belonging to the parasytic class. The V-th Section explained that if Vershinin has divested himself of the clerical habit of his own free will and has completely broken up relations with the Church hierarchy, taking to some productive occupation, he was not to be deprived of civil rights. (September 25-th, 1920, s. N 950)." (N. 101.)

Religious corporations as such are also deprived of the elementary civil rights:

"Religious corporations as such do not enjoy the rights of a legal person. Accordingly, all the mandates, certificates etc. issued by religious corporations have no legal force in

Soviet institutions. They may deal only with religious affairs." (N. 102.)

B) Conscription of clergymen.

The newspaper "Village Commune" of March 25-th 1919 denounces the minister of Kremnitchesky parish in the province of Tcherepovetz who, having been conscripted in the Red Army, was nevertheless left in the village because the peasants did not let him go. (N. 103.)

C) Compulsory labour for clergy.

N 1—3 of the abovementioned official publication of the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice published the following under the heading "Concerning the civil rights and obligations of ministers of worship":

> "The Central Executive Committee has received a telegraphic petition from the local Orthodox Church Councils of Kungur for exemption of the ministers of worship from compulsory labour. This petition was handed over to the Commissariat of Justice. The V-th Section declared that the decree about general labour conscription imposed the labour duty upon capable members of the community for the sake of the socialistic society.
>
> "The rules concerning the exemption from this duty ("Izvestia", 1920, N 67) have no

special clause referring to the ministers of worship.

"When the hours of compulsory labour coincide with the hours of religious service it is always possible to put off the latter and have the time free for public works. (April 8-th, 1920, N 264.)" (N. 104.)

D) Expulsion from the Church and private houses; dispossession of income.

Those cases are very numerous as the expulsion spread over the entire territory of Russia. The following three examples are very typical:

1) In the province of Gomel (Kormianskaia Volost) the priest is living in the keeper's lodge. His house, his garden and kitchen-garden have been handed over to the school; the deacon's house has been turned into the Club of Komsomol, and his kitchen-garden partitioned." (N. 105.)

2) "The nuns of the former Valdaisky Korotsky monastery (Province of Novgorod) have lodged a complaint against the demand to enter the local section of the Communist Party under the threat of being expelled from the monastery." (N. 106.)

3) "Izvestia" report the case of an unemployed priest who asked to be taken as an ordinary labourer at the Zadonsky mines.

The Workers' Committee consented to satisfy the request on condition of a preliminary divestment of the clerical habit." (N. 107.)

Finally, the most effective instrument of terrorising and oppressing the clergy was, and still is, the system of public denonciations in the press, which is very largely practised.

It may be confidently asserted that the total number of denonciations against the clergy published in the communistic papers of Moscow and Petrograd alone runs into thousands. Papers like "Biednota" have a special space daily devoted to the denonciations against politically unreliable persons, among whom the clergymen occupy the first place.

Here are some typical examples of such denonciations:

1) "In the village Old Tomashevo the priest, with assistance of the parish Council, assembles the children on holidays in church, making them learn prayers and explaining to them the great importance of the Holy Russian Church." (N. 108.)

2) "In the school of the village Komarovka the wife of the local priest teaches religion." (N. 109.)

3) "In the village Kamishino (in the district of Volks) the local teacher (Miss Nekrassova) organised a solemn reception of

the local Bishop reminding of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem. All the children were ranged in two rows holding two pine twigs each. Those twigs they threw at the feet of the Bishop as he passed.

"Would it not be better to take those pine twigs and imitating another biblical example expel from the temple of science and education the pedagogue who poisons young brains with silly superstitions!" (N. 110.)

4) "In Kiev, in Gaissin Church the young priest thus appeals in his sermons: 'I have received the news that the prisoners in the local prison demand bread and money. All who believe must respond to that voice of the suffering ones.' And at once the hands stretched towards the urn and a rain of money poured into it. Now we see about whom the priest and his faithful followers care most." (N. 111.)

5) "Priest Sokolov who received from the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration the Seraphimovsky Chapel started in it a large wholesale and retail trade in oil and candles." (N. 112.)

6) The "Village Commune" published a denonciation against the priest of the village Toyma (Province of Northern Dvina) for holding a sermon about the dangers of modern ideas for children. (N. 113) etc. etc.

We need not add that these denonciations always led to the severe reprisals against the persons in question.

After all it is not so surprising that a part of the clergy proved unable to stand that unheard of terror and oppression. More astonishing is the fact that the Government achieved the end it was striving at only in the fifth year of its existence.

Having done its best to effect a cleavage inside the Church — which as we saw was its avowed aim — the Government is now trying to foster the existing strife hoping for the final dissolution of its chief enemy. In the official publications we find triumphant and malicious articles and correspondences describing what is going on. Thus one of the papers writes:

> "As if on the Roerich's picture "Three crowns", lit up by the red dawn of revolution, the three knights of darkness that pass into eternity — the black one, the brown one and the yellow-and-blue one (i. e. the old Church, the reformers and the autocephalous Church) — are fighting for life and death." (N. 114.)

Many telegrams speak of the disorders caused by the struggle between the various fractions of the Church in the Ukraine. (N. 115.)

The communist Professor B. Titlinov gives the following description of the situation in his leaflet "The new church":

"... the large majority of the clergy and of the Church communities refused to recognize the new ecclesiastical administration created under the auspices of the "Living Church". The names of the leaders soon became odious.

"The excitement among the masses was so great that some of the leaders ran great personal risks. Father A. Vvedensky in Petrograd was stoned. Others would have been dealt with in the same way if the militia did not protect them. The bishops and priests belonging to the "Living Church" could not safely officiate or even appear in church and in the streets. They were met with reproaches and swears. Ignorant people began to talk about the coming of Antichrist. The scandalmongers of Petrograd even said that Father Vvedensky went about in a motor-car bearing the number of the Beast put upside down (999). At the public meetings and discussions arranged by the "Living Church" the hostility of certain elements of the audience was simply astonishing, especially as many a bitter word was said about the Orthodox Church during the revolution without arousing any protest at all. And here were the churchmen, ardent believers, with a glowing fire of Christianity in their hearts met with shouts and whistles as soon as they appeared." (N. 116.)

Bishop Antonin who was placed by the Soviet Government at the head of the Russian Church thus characterised the situation:

> "I cannot with a clear conscience sit any longer in the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration and remain in intercourse with those who have broken the Church canons. I can force myself to collaborate with them as far as administration is concerned in order to preserve it, but I really cannot maintain spiritual intercourse and pray with them; I saw that for the first time last Sunday in Strastnoy Monastery. When the Credo was being recited, the chief leader of the "Living Church", Father Krassnitsky came to me and according to the custom said: "Christ is among us"; I, instead of answering: "He is and shall be", said: "Between us there is no Christ" and refused to give him a kiss. I remain in the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration merely in order to preserve some sort of peace. I can at least, by my very presence there, check the impetuousness of the "Living Church" and keep it in certain boundaries. I receive complaints from all parts of Russia against it and its emissaries who have provoked a great irritation among population by their threats and acts of violence. It is especially important to restrain it from carrying out the following resolutions of the

Conference: 1) concerning married bishops; 2) concerning the second marriages of the clergy; 3) concerning the transition from regular to secular clergy; 4) concerning the marriages between closely related persons. In other words we must force the "Living Church" to accept the programme of the "Church Reform" and then we shall be able to work with it." (N. 117.)

The adherents of the new church began to dismiss the clerics regarded as undesirable by the Soviet Government. Thus according to "Izvestia":

"At the conference of the clerics and laymen in Kharkov it was decided to dismiss and deprive of the right to officiate several priests ..." (N. 118.)

The Russian papers abroad published similar reports which were later on officially corroborated. E. g.:

"The administration of the Petrograd Diocese passed a resolution to the effect of dismissing all the priests who do not recognise, or go as far as to resist, the new Ecclesiastical Administration." (N. 119.)

"34 bishops are being dismissed by the decision of the All-Russian Conference of the "Living Church". The following bishops have manifested, according to the Conference, most

glaringly their counter-revolutionary aspirations: Varlaam of Mstislavl, Seraphim of Tver, Nathaniel of Kharkov, Cyrill of Iaroslavl, Tikhon of the Urals, Sylvester of Perm and Michael, the Metropolitan of Kiev. They will be dismissed in the first place." (N.120.)

Notwithstanding all the reprisals, secret conferences of clergy and laymen take place here and there, with the aim of somehow putting an end to the existing cleavage. Thus the "Izvestia" report that in Kharkov

> "parallel with the reformers Conference another one has assembled at the Cold Mountain. Ten days have been given for penitence to the adherents of the "Living Church". (N. 121.)

According to the information of the Russian press abroad:

> "In spite of the extraordinary watchfulness of the State Political Department a series of secret Church conferences took place in Vladimir, Kursk, Iaroslavl, Riazan, Perm and other towns. Everywhere resolutions were passed to the effect of not recognizing the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration, and in favour of support being given to Patriarch Tikhon." (N. 122.)

The adherents of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration replied by repressions. E. g.:

"Nicolas, the newly preferred bishop of Saratov, declared that the groups of believers which do not recognize the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration will be excommunicated." (N. 123.)

The former Archbishop of Smolensk, Theodosius, who fled to Warsaw, in his interview with the correspondent of the "Russpress" Agency gave the following description of the ecclesiastical strife:

"At the end of March arrived in Kiev archbishop Tikhon, formerly of Kursk, a follower of the "Living Church" who obtained the preferment to the Metropolitan See of Kiev. Immediately upon his arrival he sent a circular letter to the clergy demanding that it should come for registration and profess its obedience to the Ecclesiastical Administration of Moscow. The clergy replied by unanimous refusal. Tikhon sent out a repeated demand threatening with reprisals in case of non-compliance. The result was exactly the same — the clergy of Kiev refused to recognize Tikhon.

"In the week before Easter, on Wednesday night, the bolsheviks arrested the old Metropolitan of Kiev, Michael, the Rector of the Ecclesiastical Academy in Kiev, Archbishop Vassily (Bogdashevsky) and Bishops Alexis, Nasarius and Demetrius. Many priests were also arrested.

"On the next day bishop Alexis was set free, as he apparently consented to acknowledge the Living Church. The others were taken to Moscow. Among the priests arrested in Kiev was also Father Jurakovsky, well-known to everybody in Kiev. When the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration forbade to pray for Patriarch Tikhon during the service, the Church Administration in Kiev, not wishing to create a pretext for conflict between the clergy and the Government ordered that prayer should be offered behind the altar. In spite of that Father Jurakovsky continued to pray for Patriarch as usually, exposing himself to a great danger. He was also taken to Moscow.

"What is going on in Kiev is also going on in other parts of Russia. Everywhere the bolsheviks are persecuting those clergymen who do not recognize the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration replacing them by satellites of Antonin.

"The population is discontended and excited, but it is not organised and practically helpless." (N. 124.)

Under such conditions, believing the atmosphere to be extremely favourable, the leaders deemed it necessary and timely, after ascertaining that

"the struggle against religion has already passed several stages" (N. 125.)

to pass over to the last and culminating stage which is cynically defined as that of the entire "abolition of the Church". (N. 126.)

The concrete illustrations that are given below in chronological order speak for themselves.

1) In the number 15th of the Tiflis paper "Zaria Vostoka", from January 22nd 1923, was stated the following:

> "To day the military cathedral was solemnly handed over to Komsomol[1]). In the presence of a huge mass of workers, Red army soldiers, communists and others, the president of the Gorsoviet[2]), Comrade Pievzov handed over to the representative of the Komsomol the keys of the cathedral. The "International hymn" resounded from the belfries, performed by the wind orchestras.
>
> Red flags were hoisted. In the evening the former military cathedral — and from now on the club of the Komsomol — lit up brightly with electricity. Over a sea of lights presided the red communistic star." (N. 127.)

The cathedral of St. Nicolas in Batum is one of the most revered churches of Transcaucasia. Within its railings are interred the heroes of Caucasus, as well as Gen. Natiev, Gen. Liakhov, and others

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[1]) The Union of the Communistic Youth.
[2]) The Town Council.

murdered in 1919. The very railings are made up of cannons, dating back to the Caucasian wars.

At the time of the occupation of Batum by the British, in the cathedral of St. Nicolas anglican services were also held.

2) "Izvestia" of February 20-th 1923. The article entitled "On antireligious battlefront" begins as follows:

"Among the workers the fight against the Church is in full swing";

then it goes to say that

"the paper "The Working Ukraine" reports a whole series of cases of the liquidation of churches in the mine region. In most cases the churches are handed over to the schools"... (N. 128.)

3) "Pravda" of February 23-rd in a telegram from Tula reports that in the village Zmievka it has been decided

"to destroy the church and to use the material for building a school and a Popular Home." (N. 129.)

4) "Ufa, February 24-th. The conference for the improvement of the children's lot in Bashkiria has decided to close all the monasteries." (N. 130.)

5) "Vladikavkaz, February 24-th. The population of one of the villages in Ossetia has expelled the priest. The church property

has been divided between the poorest population." (N. 131.)

6) "By the order of the Moscow Soviet the Pymen Church has been closed."

"The Moscow Soviet has issued an order for the closing of the Church of St. Alexander of Neva in village Vsesviatskoie (near Moscow) which is to be handed over to the "Isolator" factory to be turned into the workers' club." (N. 132.)

7) "The Moscow Soviet has recently closed the Bogoliubsky Chapel (in Varvarskaia place), the Chapel of Joy Unexpected (at the Serpuchov Gate) and the Jewish praying home in Novoslobodskaia street." (N. 133.)

8) "The Central Executive Committee of Ajaristan has handed over the Church of St. Michael in Gorodok to the N. regiment." (N. 134.)

9) "Alatyr, March 6-th. A convent and a monastery have been closed. The premises have been given to the workers and Soviet officials." (N. 135.)

10) "Simferopol, March 7-th. The Home Commissariat of the Crimea has declared the cathedral of St. Alexander of Neva to be henceforward the Central State Museum for objects of religious worship. It is not to be used for religious services." (N. 136.)

11) "Orel, March 7-th. The Jewish synagogue... has been turned into a stock exchange." (N. 137.)

12) "The Local Soviet of Red Priesnia has given the Church of Pymen to Komsomol to be used as a lecture hall." (N. 138.)

13) "In Podkustchevsky, near Rostov on Don... all the bells have been taken down... at the sounds of international hymn on March 14-th. It is also planned to use the church as a theatre." (N. 139.)

14) "Penza, March 15-th. ...the local Cathedral is to be used as a library." (N. 140.)

15) "Odessa, March 21-st. The Liquidation Committee has closed six churches, one synagogue and one memorial chapel. Two churches and the synagogue have been turned into theatres." (N. 141.)

16) "In the district of Nikolaevsk the young Jewish labourers have seized the synagogue and turned it into a school." (N. 142.)

17) "The Executive Committee of the Rogojsko-Simonovsky local Soviet has asked the permission of the Moscow Soviet to use the Church of St. Martin the Confessor for general meetings of the workers." (N. 143.)

18) A correspondence from Gomel published in the "Izvestia" of March 24-th reports that

"a series of measures has been proposed by the local Housing Commission for the imrovement of housing conditions."

Among other things

"one third of the churches, synagogues and other places of worship will be requisitioned and used for children homes, schools, veterans' homes etc." (N. 144.)

19) "... In the village Great Buyalyk (Odessa district) took place a solemn auto-da-fe of icons. The Church has been turned into a library and a People's Home." (N. 145.)

20) "Tiflis, March 25-th. The Cathedral of Gori has been requisitioned for educational purposes." (N. 146.)

21) "Tiflis, March 25-th. The monastery of Mozanet has been handed over to the trade-unions to be used as a resting-home for workers." (N. 147.)

22) 'Izvestia' of March 25-th publish a telegram from Serebriakovo concerning the closing of a church in Kirevo. (N. 148.)

23) A telegram from Kharkov of March 30-th reads:

"In the Lenin volost the church has been handed over to Komsomol to be used as a club. On several mines in the Donetz coal-fields ... the churches have been turned into schools." (N. 149.)

24) "Izvestia" of April 3-rd report the closing of a convent in Minsk. (N. 150.)

25) A telegram from Odessa of April 4-th says that in many villages of the Balta district the priests have been expelled. (N. 151.)

26) A telegram from Tcheliabinsk of April 11-th says that it has been decided

"to turn the churches into schools and to give the bells to the Famine Relief Committee for agricultural reconstruction." (N. 152.)

27) "Ekaterinoslav, April 12-th. The pupils of the local railway school have demanded that the railway church should be used as a club." (N. 153.)

28) "In village Morosovskaia (near Tzaritzin) it has been decided to turn a church into a railway school." In the same place three other churches have been closed. (N. 154.)

29) "The Moscow Soviet has decided to close the Saviour Church in Durnovsky Lane and to hand over the building to the tramway workers to be used as a club." (N. 155.)

30) "The workers' faculty (Rabfak) of the Petrovsky Agricultural Academy has petitioned for the closing of the church in the Gratchevo estate and for transforming it into a club and resting home for students." (N. 156.)

31) "The Communist nucleus of the Veterans' Home in memory of Radischev decided to petition the Moscow Soviet for the liquidation of the church which they want to use as a club." (N. 157.)

32) "The Housing Society No. 22, in Danilovsky Kammer-Kollejsky Val[1]) asked the Moscow Soviet to close the house church... The request has been satisfied." (N. 158.)

33) "The house church in the Children's Home in village Marfino has been closed by the Moscow Soviet." (N. 159.)

34) "Kutais, April 10-th. The local synagogue has been handed over to Komsomol." (N. 160.)

35) A telegram from Kustanay of April 14-th reports that the church in village Anikhovsky has been used for educational purposes. (N. 161.)

36) In Vosnesensk the church was turned into a theatre and the synagogue into a club. (N. 162.)

37) In Gori a commission has been elected "to carry out the resolution about the closing of churches and using them for educational purposes." (N. 163.)

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[1]) A street in Moscow.

38) "Baku, April 17-th. The soldiers of a regiment billeted in Baku have taken off the crosses from the old barrack church and applied to their honorary chief — Az-Oil Company — with a request to help them to turn the home of oppression into that of education." (N. 164.)

39) "At the Balashin factory (in Moscow) the church has been turned into a school. A solemn procession and a meeting took place upon that occasion." (N. 165.)

40) "Odessa, April 22-nd. In village Shatzy it has been decided to close the Roman Catholic church and to open a club and a theatre instead of it. On Easter Sunday a play entitled "The execution of a communard" was given in the former church." (N. 166.)

41) "Kharkov, April 22-nd. In village Kamenka (District of Starobielsk) the church has been turned into a theatre." (N. 167.)

42) "In village Novobielinko (in the same District) one church has been used as a school and another as an electrical power station." (N. 168.)

43) "Rostov on Don, April 21-st. The students of the Rabfak and technical school in Taganrog passed a resolution demanding the closing of the synagogue which is to be adapted as a club." (N. 169.)

44) "Tsaritzin, April 22-nd. The men of the artillery depot billeted here have closed the church situated on the territory of the military barracks. The building is being adapted for barracks and library." (N. 170.)

45) "The Moscow Soviet has decided to close Zatchatievsky monastery and to hand over the churches to the Central Museum Administration... The closing began on April 28-th." (N. 171.)

46) "The house church in Durnovsky Lane (in Moscow), handed over to the tramway workers, has been now cleared from all objects of religious service and is being adapted as a club." (N. 172.)

47) "A telegram from Kustanay in "Izvestia" reports that in village Kopygenskoye the church has been turned into a school and the priest was ordered to leave the village in five days' time." (N. 173.)

48) "Tiflis, May 3-rd. 73 churches have been closed in the district of Letchkhum." (N. 174.)

It would be useless to go on enumerating similar cases as the number of desecrated churches is counted by thousands, as may be seen from the fact — officially registered — that the number of monasteries seized reached towards the beginning of 1922 the considerable figure of over 700.

In conclusion some examples must be given which illustrate the atmosphere of moral perversity and sacrilege that accompany the closure of churches:

> 49) "Izvestia" in a telegram of March 6-th say: "The peasants of Bogoiavlenskaia volost have burnt down the God's temple." (N. 175.)
>
> 50) "Pravda" of March 3-rd reproduced the text of a sacrilegious advertisement posted in some shop in Murom announcing a performance to be given in the Cathedral — with a farce, dances and "gorgeous refreshments including church wine." (N. 176.)

"Pravda" of May 8-th described how the Komsomol had used the Church of Pymen (in Moscow) seized by it:

> "On May 3-rd the Red Priesnia section of Komsomol called its conference in the church"...

The latter, according to "Pravda", had completely changed its aspect:

> "The portrait of Liebknecht dominated all the icons. The image of St. Panteleimon the Healer was hid behind a banner. From the walls the newspaper headings shouted out:
>
> Knock down the saints!
>
> The saints kept silent.

...An old woman was just passing by. She saw crowds of people entering the church and thought it was an episcopal service.

So she went in.

A lad from the mandate commission looked at her:

— Come on, old thing...

The guard at the entrance took away his rifle welcoming her.

She crossed herself and started to listen"... (Here follows a description of the filthy sacrilegious songs performed by the young hooligans in the church.) (N. 177.)

The same "Pravda" in its issue of May 11-th gives a description of a synagogue turned into a Komsomol club:

"A large poster appeals:

'Do not cross yourselves — learn'."

(Then follows a description of the indignation of the mass of Jews who assembled in the yard.) (N. 178.)

It would be naive to think that any legal forms were being observed in those proceedings. Only in cases of acute conflicts with the population was it necessary to keep up the appearance of legality and to give an official sanction to the sacrilegious acts. Here are some illustrations of those "sanctions", taken from the official publication of the Commissariat of Justice:

1) "The Liquidation Commission of Omsk having examined the case of the hospital church and taking into account that there are Red Army soldiers in the hospital, and that consequently the observance of religious rites on its territory is injurious to the educational work amongst them... has decided: to close the church, to hand over its property to whomever it pertains, to advise the Provincial Department of Popular Education to adapt the Church building in a fortnight's time after ratification of this decision by the Executive Committee as a Museum of ecclesiastical antiquities, and to inform the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice of the above decision.

"That decision was ratified by the Provincial Executive Committee of Omsk on October 12-th 1921. The V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice declared that it had nothing to say against the closing of the hospital church. (January 16-th, 1922.)" (N. 179.)

2) "On September 23-rd 1921 was closed the Spasso-Kazansky convent in village Dvorianinovo (district of Alexin, Province of Tula). Its premises and its property, including dead and living stock, were handed over to the District Section of Popular Education to be used for children's

communes. The objects of service were given to the local religious community in exchange for receipt. A small part of the property was handed over to the District Section of Social Relief. There were 37 nuns in the convent on the day of closing. Those incapable of work refused to go to the Social Relief Home and went to their relatives.

"...The plenipotentiary Commission of the Central Executive Committee resolved: to approve of the closing of the said community for the sake of using the land, the buildings and the stock for the children's communes, but to regard it as having come too late, for it was a crime to tarry so long with the abolition of that hotbed of idleness and immorality." (N. 180.)

3) "On January 4-th 1922, the expert of the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice examined in the presence of the representatives of the Moscow Soviet and of the parish, as well as of the churchwarden, the priest and the inspector of the Homes of Social Relief, the church of St. Vladimir and Mary in Protopopovsky Lane No. 19.

"Having acquainted itself with the act of the examination, the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice resolved that the above-mentioned church, being a typical house church, situated on the premises

occupied by a Soviet institution (the Social Relief Homes), was liable to be closed. (January 11-th, 1922, No. 20.)" (N. 181.)

All the attempts of the faithful to save monasteries and churches by means of organising labour communes led to no result. Notwithstanding the fact that the whole income of the "communes" and "collective farms" organised by religious communities goes to the Government the latter keeps a constant watch over the personal staff of the "communes" and investigates the conditions of life in them.

The official organ of the Commissariat of Justice thus speaks of the results of those investigations:

> "The investigations of those 'collective farms' proved that their members included all former monks. Among the 'labourers', registered as capable of work, were sometimes to be found the monks over 90 years of age with the priors and prioresses at their head.
>
> "The V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice frequently gave its instructions to the local authorities... They may be thus summed up:
>
> "No religious organisation may be registered, financed by the State or looked upon as a productive, demonstrative or any kind of economic association. Persons who are

serving in some religious organisation, like monks, official servants of various ecclesiastical organisations etc., may not become members of the said associations...

"The V-th Section has demanded that the statutes of all labouring communes and associations formed on the territory of the former monasteries should be sent to it for verification. Those guilty of breaking up the orders of the central Government will, of course, be properly punished." (N. 182.)

Notwithstanding the excellent conditions of the monastery farms which discharge all their rates and duties, a severe punishment, in the shape of expulsion of the wretched monks, is often inflicted upon them by the Government. Here is one of the typical decisions of the latter:

"The Plenipotentiary Commission of the Central Executive Committee having discussed in its sitting of November 22-nd 1921, the case of Kondyrevsky convent (district of Krapivin, Province of Tula) has come to the following conclusion:

"Kondyrevsky convent, judging by the data in our possession, was legally abolished as early as 1918 when the members of this convent obtained their allotments of land on equal terms with others and in conformity

with the decisions of the village communities, local executive committees and district land section.

"As may be seen from the act of investigation, drawn by the Commission of the Provincial Land Section of Tula on October 8-th this year, the economic conditions of the said association are excellent; it may serve as an example and as a reliable point of application of various agricultural innovations; it is especially to be mentioned that those conditions have been attained without the use of hired labour, by the efforts of the members of the association themselves.

"All State duties, food impost etc., were fully and in time paid up by the association.

"Yet, the monastery ways and customs practically continued to influence the life of the association, especially as at the head of it stood the former Reverend Mother and her satellites, although the law formally forbids it...

"The Commission has therefore decreed... that all former nuns should be excluded from the association save those who are incapable of work; the latter may be left with the consent of all other members of the association, but only as pensioners... (November 22-nd, 1921.)" (N. 183.)

Finally, not always did the parishoners succeed even in saving the property of the churches that were being closed. The policy of the Government in this respect was quite clear.

On p. p. 74—75 of "The Church and the Revolution" (No. 1—3) we read:

> "Not all the agents on the spot have rightly understood the main lines of policy indicated both in the supplementary instruction of the Commissariat of Justice and the decree of January 25-th 1918 and in the circular of the Commissariat of Education concerning the closing of house churches...
>
> "The following instruction was given by the V-th Section: the groups of citizens are entitled to receive from the sacred objects of a closed house church only one Communion cloth; all the rest, including objects of service and other property, is to be handed over directly to the local Soviet to remain under its strict control."

Further we read:

> "... in connection with the new economic policy, some of local Soviets have created special commissions "for distribution of church property" and began an unauthorised sale of the objects of service of the abolished churches. Such a commission, e. g., was formed by the district Executive Committee

of Sapojkov (Province of Riazan), which having closed the Nicolo-Bavykinsky monastery has sent out special notices to the local 'Church Councils', inviting them to the sale of the objects of service of the said monastery and advising those 'Church Councils' to take with them 6—7 million roubles if they want to buy the Church valuables.

"The V-th Section saw in those proceedings a direct transgression of the decree of the Council of People's Commissaries as well as of the repeated instructions of the V-th Section itself, according to which the valuables of the closed churches, consisting of golden and silver objects and precious stones, are to be handed over to the State Treasury." (N. 184.)

Those expostulations end in an outspoken admission of the purely economic reasons of the sacrilegious "abolition" of the churches.

The official text runs thus:

"... the measures undertaken by the V-th Section are easily comprehensible. The valuables of the closed churches are not needed by anyone in their actual shape. They are being dispersed through the political shortsightedness of some local Soviets. Yet in a mass, as a gold and silver fund, they are of great importance to our exchange of goods with Western Europe". (N. 185.)

This statement documentally establishes out of what fund are obtained the means for so called "exchange of goods" between Soviet Russia and Western Europe".

CHAPTER VI.

Organisation of religious mock-festivals. Public outrages.

The next stage of anti-religious persecutions which chronologically coincides with the two former (i. e. the destruction of ecclesiastical unity and the closure of churches), but logically forms their direct continuation, is the organisation of so-called "Komsomol festivals", in the first place "Christmas" and "Easter". Those are the first attempts at public mockery and desecration of things that are most sacred to every true Christian. The propaganda leaflets of the bolsheviks thus speak of the nessecity to combat the celebration of religious festivals:

> "We must bear in mind that there is nothing holy in religious holidays. They have been established not by God, nor even by religion, but by primitive, ignorant, semi-wild men. To combat religious festivals means to combat slavery, barbarity, ignorance, it means to fight against economic backwardness,

against the blind, incomprehensible forces of nature enslaving the man." (N. 186.)

As to the organisation of mock-festivals itself, the bolshevik press kept silent until the very last moment and only on the eve of Christmas, this greatest of all the Christian holidays, there appeared in it suchlike appeals:

"The bond of communistic youth throws out a challenge to the powers of Heaven...

"Let the old world finish their old hypocritic songs in their old churches, let these old, cracked and hoarse-sounding bells still ring, and let the old, dark priests renew their gods, their faith and their prayers, these helpers of the oppressors, who have surrounded themselves by incense and candle-lights. They always bring with them only darkness, and offer to the working and toiling people but the "joy" of new chains.

"These two worlds will meet, in these days they will put against each other their strength, and who can doubt as to the results of the fight?" (N. 187.)

The eve of this mock-festival is thus described by the correspondent of the official "Izvestia" in an article entilled "The Assault of Heaven":

"And yet on the eve of the examination, looking at my comrades of the Komsomol, I could read upon their faces assurance of the

certainty that they will pass well the test of the Komsomol in the school of the world revolution.

"We have already mobilised the 'Sverdlovtzy'[1]) as well as the red professors of the socialistic academy. We will arrange it somehow. There is the fact that within the 10 days already over 40 meetings have been arranged, which were attended by many scores of thousands of the working youth. Not only lectures were read, but films were demonstrated on anti-religious subjects, e. g. 'The Performer of miracles', the 'Opening of the holy shrines', 'Father Seraphim' and others.

"And then the performances of plays. Not merely plays, but special ones, such as 'What happened in the Club of Komsomol on the Christmas eve' or the 'Immaculate Conception'. The studios of Meyerhold are busy with those things.

"Go and hear how well the young workmen of the manufactory of Bromley sing, what basses and tenors they have! But still more interesting is to see how in the Rogojsko-Simonovsky Club the workmen from the Dynamo Works, the pupils of locksmiths and weavers, smiths and carpenters, with their hard, burned and horny hands play — what

[1]) Students of the Workers' University called after the name of Sverdlov.

do you think — upon mandolines and domras! It is practically not to be believed that Peter-plumber is able to play upon such an aristocratic instrument all sorts of Marseillaises and Chansons-Tristes, and, above all, following the written music!

"The godless Sverdlov-men have taken the commanding heights of the carnival into their hands...

"These young people sit nights through thinking out and composing little songs, sewing the costumes, drawing placards and carricatures." (N. 188.)

It was mainly young people who took part in these sacrilegious performances. Thus children belonging to the Komsomol were ordered to come round to their respective clubs where the following scenes could be witnessed:

"At the door of the room, where the dressing of the personages of the carnival takes place, a small crowd lies in wait, wishing to penetrate the secrets of the Christmas mysteries... Everybody is there: monks, rabbis, cardinals, devils etc....

'Comrades, those wo received a costume, register yourself!'

— Rabbi, Orthodox priest, devil... — are being called one after another.

"At last the dressed-up appeared before the door of their dressing room. People came to receive the blessing from the priest which he, with his charcoal whiskers, willingly distributed with the help of a wine bottle." (N. 189.)

Special plans of mock-Christmas celebrations were drawn up in various places of Russia. In that of Moscow we read:

"3000 mottos of anti-religious contents are printed. The meetings were arranged by the lecturers of the Sverdlov University." (N. 190.)

We find there, too, a whole repertory of sacrilegious theatrical performances specially organised for the people upon this occasion:

The Rogojsko - Simonovsky quarter: The Taganskaia Place, Vulcan theatre: "The Xmas night".

Zamoskvoretzky quarter: Serpukhovskaia Place, B. Ordynka, the theatre of Struisky: "The Immaculate Conception".

Sokolnitchesky quarter: B. Krasnoselskaia, No. 5, the club of the Komsomol: "The Xmas night".

Krasnaia Priesnia: Prokhorovka, "The Immaculate Conception". The People's theatre: "Xmas night".

Baumann's quarter: Baumann's Theatre: "The Immaculate Conception".

Khamovnitchesky quarter: Theatre of Revolution: "The Xmas night". (N. 191.)

The celebrations themselves are thus described by the communist press (we omit on purpose the most offensive descriptions):

"Have the Komsomol people passed the examination?

"Yes, they have, and very successfully, too.

"How could it be otherwise, when the Moscow Committee of the Komsomol counted upon 10,000 members of the carnival and the column consisted of over 20,000. This is easily explained: we, the members of the Komsomol, were joined by over 10,000 young workmen and young people of the "rabfaks"[1]), "vtus", "vus" etc. Everything went as it was planned. The programme drawn up by the Moscow Committee was not only fully carried out, but it had been largely exceeded.

"This morning, from 10 o'clock the Komsomol people did not sleep any longer.

"Some were constructing Sabaoth, some wrote out the mottos, and some prepared to officiate the mass.

"It must be noticed that this new thing has a very great success, and has drawn to our

[1]) Workers' faculties.

side many inhabitants. Andrew Shokhin, the Priest of the Komsomol (as he has been nicknamed on the way), sung an "acathist to Marx" a lovely song changed to a marxist way.

"The answers were given by the poets who at the moment stood near Shokhin. And, on finishing the prayers, they again and again sung "The Priest Sergius", composing still new and new songs, made up here, on their way.

"Further on, unto the tune of "Krakoviak" [a merry polish dance tune], the members of the Komsomol went dancing around the procession. It was rather jolly!

"The Komsomol people prayed in different languages. The students of the Sverdlov university imitated also the representatives of different religions. The rabbi and the archdeacon looked really quite genuine. The first prayed, and the prayers were repeated:

'Birch-tree logs, birch-tree logs,
Two lemonades, two lemonades.'

As I already stated, everything went as it was planned out: the gods and the devils, and the representatives of all the religions and deities upon earth. And — there was even a policeman.

"And what did the inhabitants of the town say to it?

"The Komsomol was not only followed by 20,000 of the young people, but drew a few hundred thousands of inhabitants out of the houses into the street. Even the young people who did not belong to the Komsomol movement, and who like to hear the church singing, roared with laughter at hearing the "Acathist to Marx" and other prayers performed in the Komsomol arrangement.

"I met at the Iverskaia Chapel a foreign lady journalist who viewed with great astonishment the huge mass of devout and praying people (aged from 14 to 20), which assembled near the above chapel. I do not know whether anybody had given her an explanation as to the social position of those who followed the banners and who "prayed" so devotely. I am afraid that some of the foreign papers have already received the usual sort of "information". It is true, however, that somebody of the Komsomol club advised her to turn for information to the Zamoskvoretzky and the Khamovnichesky "raikom"'s of the Komsomol who had hired for the day the place by the chapel of Iverskaia, for the celebration of their Xmas.

"The young people, starting from Petrovka on, moved to Sadovaia by the B. Dmitrovka, and from there, returning by the Tverskaia to the Place of Revolution, and then, again

coming back to the Alexander Station Place, with music, songs and dances, at the sound of a military orchestra, burned the representatives of Heaven, like Buddha, Osiris, Marduk and others.

"And then, for a long, long time, the members of the Komsomol explained to the inhabitants that they do not cross themselves when they hear the thunder (even would it sound three times), as they have a lightning preserver. Thus they are taught in the rabfak, in the clubs of Komsomol and in the schools of "political ABC". (N. 192.)

Another writer thus describes the things he saw in the main streets of Moscow on Christmas day:

"... On the Tverskaia Place a solid human mass. Over the heads flutter flags and banners, and slowly float placards and figures made out of paper. Everywhere mottoes and devices:

— Religion is the opium for the people.

— Man created God unto his own likeness, etc.

"Effective triumphant coaches move slowly onwards. They are occupied by the masked "gods" and "godesses", with all their court nobility and the court servants — archangels and seraphs, saints and martyrs, priests of all religions, Orthodox, Jewish, Catholic etc.

"Some procession proceeds solemnly, — a good old woman who met them might fervently cross herself at the sight of it, and at the same time from everywhere around is heard: "Oh you, my terrace" and suchlike merry song.

"Dancing, laughing...

"When in the whole world the dense, evil-smelling fog of religion will disperse, humanity, looking around and back to all its naive past, will gratefully remember that the first public "challenge to God" had been thrown in Soviet Russia on January 7th 1923." (N. 193.)

"The godfearing community of Moscow has witnessed something as yet unseen. From the Sadovaia Place to the Place of the Revolution the endless procession of gods and priests of the world has stretched itself out. A practical help for the study of the thousand year old bigotry. Here we find the yellow Buddha, with his crooked legs, blessing hands, with his slits of eyes and the tired rascally expression, here is the Marduk of Babylon and the Orthodox Mother of God. Chinese bonsas, the Pope of Rome in his golden tiara, who is blessing his new adepts from the many-coloured motor-car, the protestant pastor on a long stick, and the movements of his black habit are cleverly manipulated from below with the aid of a string. The Russian priest

offers to marry anybody for a small sum: he is clad in the typical churchhabit. There is a monk, astride on a coffin with the holy shrines. He also offers to sell his goods to the easy-to-please buyers. A jewish cantor-rabbi, lifting his hands, is reciting in a sad-flowing voice how "the priest had a dog whom he dearly loved. The dog ate a piece of meat." He shows on his hand the size of the piece of meat. "Ah, and he killed the dog." A Sverdlov student imitates with perfection the avarice of the priests...

"Devils, in black velvet masks, and with like ears and horns, dance and capture the public...

"What a fine work has been accomplished by the club of Komsomol! We shall meet again in the Easter-week. But do not forget to bring with you a still greater number of trombones, whistles and domras. If the silliness of a thousand years has to be knocked out, then it must be knocked out with a clatter." Mark Krinitzky. (N. 194.)

Other descriptions are just as disgusting. Here is one more to conclude the list:

"... Here is the Divine Baby in the arms of Mary, clad in a red-army helmet. Joseph sides away in horror...

"A motor-car, and within are the "gods". Everything is arranged in a strict scientific order. Here are Osiris and Marduk, Buddha, Sabaoth, Jehovah, Allah, Maya with Agni, Mary with Christ, and many other different idols...

"'The Christmas of Komsomol', — the first scientific anti-religious popular demonstration in the whole world...

"... A motor-lorry with the hierophants: Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish priests, bonsas, shamans. Each of them, in his own way, promises to the faithful the blessings of the next life, and at the same time each of them rubs ominously the palms of his hands, which has to signify: "Pay up, faithful ones!"...

"... Devils, monks, little gods and goddesses run about among the procession, squealing..." (N. 195.)

Similar celebrations took place all over Russia. Witness the following telegrams:

Rostov on Don.

"The "Komsomol" Christmas has been celebrated with the assistance of a mass of nonparty workers. In the night of the 7th of January a demonstration of many thousands of the Komsomol club and of the nonparty youth took place, with torches and many dum-

mies of stuffed gods of all the religions. With revolutionary songs and in orderly columns the procession filed through the town. At the churches of all religions demonstrations took place, followed by short meetings, after which the gods were given up to fire. The members of the Komsomol, dressed up as gods and priests, demonstrated in front of the churches, synagogues, mosques and catholic churches with songs. In the evening in all the clubs long meetings were held, plays with anti-religious contents were acted. Flyleaves and a one-day paper entitled "Against God" were distributed. All this attracted a great interest among the workers." (N. 196.)

Sarapul, 7th January.

"In the evening of January 6th in the Palace of Labour a costume-ball took place with an anti-religious purpose. In the night there was a carnival in all the streets, and on the places where the churches are." (N. 197.)

Zarizyn, 7th January.

"Yesterday in all the parts of the town and in the crowded clubs anti-religious meetings and scenes were arranged. From the clubs the dressed up young people, accompanied by great crowds, went to the former Iliodor monastery, whence at midnight proceeded the carnival representing the "Procession of the gods",

with lighted torches, thousands of stars and orchestras. The procession, which was attended not only by the members of the Komsomol, but also by a crowd of over 3000 people, went through the entire town, halting before churches and arranging there plays and pantomimes such as "The Redemption of Truth". The morning service in the churches started much later than usual, and very little people attended the services; on the 7th January in all the clubs and theatres festivities were arranged. A one-day paper, "The Xmas of Komsomol", has appeared." (N. 198.)

Borisogliebsk, 7th January.

"On the occasion of the "Komsomol Christmas" the Church services were put off till early in the morning. The Komsomol waited till they began and then went round the churches in a procession with an orchestra... Interest was attracted by the mock icons and dummies of the gods which were finally burnt down. Merry songs and dances wound up the carnival after which an anti-religious meeting was arranged." (N. 199.)

Ufa, 7th January.

"A street procession was arranged by the Komsomol on the Christmas eve. It was headed by the mock priests who were followed

by drunk 'policemen' and 'generals'. In the party club a paper was read entitled 'Where do the Gods spring from'..." (N. 200.)

Tiflis, 9th January.

"The celebrations of the Komsomol Xmas started with a procession of the carnival which consisted of over 20,000 members of the Komsomol and non-party young people. Having passed the main streets of the town, the procession stopped in front of the theatre Rustavelli, where the Chairman of the Sovnarkom of Georgia Ordchelashvilli held a long speech in which he explained the role of the Komsomol Christmas in the combat against the religious prejudices. The carnival was followed by great crowds of the inhabitants who greeted the members of the Komsomol. In front of the former military cathedral, a trial over religion was displayed. After the trial bonfires were made up and there were burned the dummies of the gods and their servitors. The ceremony finished late in the night. On the following day the former military cathedral which was handed over to the Komsomol by the Commissary of War was decorated with red flags and placards. All the crosses were replaced by red stars. The placards read: "We do not want any God, we shall build our paradise on earth, let the bourgeois go to the paradise of

Heaven." In front of the cathedral anti-religious meetings took place during the whole day. The priestcraft tried to spread a rumour that God will punish Tiflis by an earthquake. The Xmas of Komsomol had a great success among the big masses of people. In the palace of the former patriarch Ambrosius a factory school was opened. The same sort of Christmas was arranged also in the provincial towns of Georgia." (N. 201.)

Grosny, 9th January.

"On the day of the Komsomol Xmas all the working young people came out into the streets. The procession of the dressed up attracted great masses of people. In the evening in all the clubs of the workers and the red army plays with anti-religious texts were performed." (N. 202.)

Novonikolaevsk, 9th January.

"A few thousands of red-army soldiers and members of the Komsomol supported the demonstrations. Great crowds of inhabitants followed the whole time after the procession. With many torches, coloured lanterns, and singing anti-religions songs, the procession passed all the main streets, going past the building of the Revolutionary Committee (Sibrevkom), from where it took the direction

of the monument on the Common Graves, where the burning of the dummies was performed. On that place a cenotaph was erected representing an open book, in which the words of Trotsky were reproduced in bright letters: 'Bite with your young teeth the granite of learning.'" (N. 203.)

"Many telegrams from all the towns come continually announcing that the Christmas of the Komsomol went through successfully.

"Thus in Novorossiisk, Nadejdinsk, Riazan, Smolensk, Saratov, Novgorod, Valuiki, Nicolaev, Chernigov etc., well organised demonstrations of the Komsomol have attracted great masses of curious people. Many non-party young people as well as many adult workmen took part in the procession. The carnivals excited a huge interest everywhere. The clubs and theatres where the anti-religious lectures were read and the anti-religious plays were put on the stage, attracted many onlookers." (N. 204.)

CHAPTER VI.

Demoralisation of the growing generation.

The anti-religious demonstrations at Christmas and Easter time have shown with an appalling clearness how far had gone the agents of the Soviet Government, or — which is the same — of the 3-rd International in destroying the elementary foundations of morality among the growing generation.

A short résumé of the work of the Communists in this field, the work performed with extraordinary, almost diabolical, persistency and energy, will serve to show how it happened.

The main outlines of the programme were set down as early as 1919 when the following principle was loudly and openly proclaimed:

> „It is our duty, not to keep the children off politics, but to bring them up in the spirit of proletarian revolution, to make their souls

respond to the waring sounds of historical storms, to make them fond of fighting, to instil in them the blood of mutineers." (N. 205.)

Those main principles sufficed for the first time. No doubt they were carried out with a great zeal and in 1922 it was already thought necessary to go further and to attempt the main task — that of eradicating religious faith and bringing up the younger generation in the spirit of militant atheism. The first information referring to the adoption of this plan we find in the Moscow "Pravda" (No. 73) of March 31-st 1923, which reports:

> "The plan of anti-religious propaganda among the younger generation has been approved by the Anti-religious Conference of the Party. The All-Russian Conference of the Departments of Political Education has heartily welcomed the initiative." (N. 206.)

The existing conditions in Russia are extremely favourable for the successful carrying out of this plan. The official publications point out that

> „the younger generation shows an enormous interest in political and sociological problems, as well as in questions of religion and sex.
>
> "At every meeting numerous questions are put about God, about senses, conscience, truth, love and sex problem. Thousands and tens of thousands of questions." (N. 207.)

Obviously the simplest way to the accomplishment of the anti-religious designs of the All-Russian Conference of Departments of Political Education lies through the school. Therefore the entire attention of the Government is henceforward centred in it.

In the first place it is deemed necessary to put an end to the teaching of religion in schools. The programme of the Government in this respect, which has been fully carried out, is clearly outlined in the instruction written by V. Dessnitsky (Stroiev), a notable Communist, and entitled "The Church and the School." He says:

> "... The secularisation of the school, the elimination of religious teaching from it, is one of the main and indisputable principles of the modern pedagogical thought. The same demand for liberation of the school from this unscientific and harmful load forms an indispensable part of the programme of the socialistic parties in all countries ...
>
> "... With regard to the exclusion of religious teaching from the schools, the teachers need not even rise to the heights of the "communistic" point of view, they need only be honest to themselves and devote all their forces to the carrying out of this reform.
>
> "... Will the democratic government really allow that the minds of the children in the State schools should be contaminated

— for the sake of higher religious science — with notions and facts which are radically opposed to the modern conception of what is good and moral?

"... The teaching of religion in schools ought to be completely discontinued since it does not fit in with the tasks of scientific education and upbringing of children in the spirit of labour and socialistic citizenship. No concessions, no compromise should be tolerated in the carrying out of this reform. That principle ought to be brought into life resolutely and unflinchingly.

"... The reform of the Church (Disestablishment and abolition of religious teaching) in Soviet Russia is formally already accomplished. But there can be no doubt that neither the declaration of principles, nor their embodiment in the shape of various decrees, nor the *prima facie* execution of the latter, mean that the task of the legislator has been fully achieved.

"... Yet, can we say with certainty that everything has been done in that direction? Has the meaning of the reform been driven home to the conscience of the large masses of population?... Of course the answer will be in the negative unless we want to lull ourselves into sleep by the music of words." (N. 208.)

The driving home of the "meaning of the reform" proved impossible chiefly owing to the methods which were adopted. They are so described by a competent writer:

> "... there are no reasons to believe that the abolition of the religious teaching went on quite smoothly. During my travels in the Northern Region I heard endless complaints of the provincial teachers against the simplified methods of carrying out the reform. Most absurdly the whole burden of it was laid upon the teachers themselves: they were threatened with repressions should the teaching of religion continue in the schools; they were compelled, under the fear of heavy penalties, to take out of the school buildings all the religious objects (icons etc.); some of the most zealous provincial reformers went so far as to take the field against the private objects of worship like crosses etc.
>
> "... Side by side with it — an excessive zeal: the compulsory displaying of the portraits of Marx and of Russian revolutionaries instead of the icons; prohibition of religious teaching even in the church buildings and after school lessons." (N. 209.)

However, from the point of view of the notorious communist pedagogue all those excesses are not so important, as the main task which consists in the following:

"... Russian communists who form the vanguard of the world proletariat, having courageously set forth to achieve the gigantic tasks of destruction, before which their Western comrades, better organised and more developed, still stop hesitatingly, are at the same time accomplishing the dirty work of cleansing the popular minds of all the rubbish that has been stocked there in the course of centuries by the zeal of the Church." (N. 210.)

Official decrees comply, as it has been pointed out above, with the demands of militant atheism. Very characteristic in this respect is the following "explanation" which appeared in No. 1—3 of the official publication of the Commissariat of Justice:

"The popular judge of the 7-th division of Ijevsky District, in the Votsky Autonomous Region, village Yavoj, has addressed the following enquiry to the Commissariat of Justice:

"Is the teaching of religion to school children by the priests to be allowed in churches by request of parents, provided it takes place after school hours?...'

"The V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice directed the Department of Justice of the Votsky Autonomous Region to explain to the popular judge of the 7-th Division of Ijevsky District that the teaching

of so-called religion to children can be allowed neither in schools nor in churches; as to persons over 18 years of age, the teaching of religion is allowed in special theological colleges. It depends on the local authorities whether church or any other building should be given for the purpose, provided a real need in it is felt among the population; the local authorities have the right in all such cases to provide for the use of church for their own needs outside the service hours. 21/1/1922." (N. 211.)

The above document is by no means an exception. It is but a typical example. But there are even more striking documents. To those belongs the conclusion of the Ufa Provincial Department of Justice (No. 1873 of September 2-nd 1920) with regard to the question of the names which may be given to the children of atheistic parents. It reads almost like an anecdote.

"The Ufa Provincial Department of Justice has addressed the following enquiry to the Commissariat of Justice:

'Several times official and private persons have enquired whether those parents who recognize only civil registration of birth may call their children by any name taken from general history and mythology, or after the saints of non-orthodox denominations, including also non-Christian, and not necessarily

stick to the list of names sanctioned by the Orthodox Church.

'Having no legislative enactement to guide us, except the general trend of the decree concerning the disestablishment of the Church, we uttered the opinion that those names were quite admissible, but that, in order to avoid mockery and ridicule, it was desirable to choose some euphonious names avoiding those which remind of dogs' names or of some obscene words. The admission of non-Orthodox names would still more emphasize the disestablished character of the Church, but as various opinions and various practical solutions of this problem are conceivable we ask you for some general guidance.'

"The V-th Section replied as follows:

'Any names may be given to new-born children who are registered in the Department of Marriage and Birth; they need not belong to any saint of whatever denomination. 27/9/1920 No. 957." (N. 212.)

The desire to make an atheist of the child from its very birth has brought about some results which would seem to be pure inventions had they not been proudly registered by the communistic press. Thus the Moscow "Pravda" (No. 97 of May 9-th 1923) describes the following incredible vote which was arranged by the communist-teacher among the children of Krementchug:

"— Those who believe in God — lift your hands please.

"Three, four, seven hands are lifted up, then two go down again.

"— Those who are against God.

"The whole forest of hands grows up quickly. All shout: "Hurrah. God has failed."" (N. 213.)

In another communist paper we find the following telegram:

"Biejetsk, April 5-th. The children and the teaching staff of the 1-st Children's Home have decided not to keep the Easter Holidays." (N. 214.)

Similar decisions and resolutions carried by the children themselves are very numerous.

We need not explain that in order to bring up the growing generation on those lines the bolsheviks require a specially trained staff of teachers and instructors.

From the very outset the Soviet Government disposed of the old teaching staff as not fitting in with its pedagogical ideals. As to what those ideals are like can be seen from the results of the special competition for the title of "the best teacher", organised by "Pravda" in the middle of March.

The instruction to the readers entitled "What to write about teachers" and printed *in extenso* in No. 62 of "Pravda", contains questions divided into 22

paragraphs under three heads: "The teacher and the school", "The teacher and the population", "The teacher as social and political worker."

Paragraph "H" is thus worded:

> "Whether the teacher is endeavouring to eradicate the religious prejudices with which the surrounding *milieu* infects the children." (N. 215.)

Paragraph "C" (2-nd part of the questionnaire) contains the questions as to the actual measures taken by the teacher to achieve that end.

The last four paragraphs bear a decidedly provocative character providing facilities for the denonciations against politically "unreliable". Thus, paragraph "A" (part 3-rd) runs as follows:

> "The political aspect of the teacher; his attitude towards the Soviet Government and its work, towards the Communist Party, towards Komsomol". (N. 216.)

Paragraph "C" runs:

> "The relations of the teacher with the local Soviet, Executive Committee and party nuclei." (N. 217.)

The two next paragraphs deal with the assistance of the teacher in the various "State campaigns" and with his "rôle in effecting a political and cultural bond between the town and the village."

The best teachers in the Soviet Republic were promised the following prizes:

> "I-st prize (for two) — each one overcoat, one suit of clothing, one pair of shoes, a watch, books for 1000 roubles (issue 1923) and newspaper "Pravda" for 2 months."

The following teachers got prizes and special recommendations:

1) V. S. Minkevitch (Pogorielsky School, Province of Minsk).

According to "Pravda" (No. 83 April 17-th 1923) one of his merits is that owing to his educational influence

> "the children do not cross themselves before meals and do not take off their hats before an icon." (N. 218.)

2) P. S. Vekshin, in charge of Children's Settlement in Kostroma. Amongst his achievements are counted antireligious propaganda by means of special posters and the foundation of a club for the young members of Komsomol, called "The Red Corner", where the children are trained in antireligious sense. (N. 219.)

3) S. K. Orlovsky (the Red Peasant School, District of Viazma, Province of Smolensk):

> "Comrade Orlovsky frequently arranges lectures for children on antireligious subjects". (N. 220.)

Consequently the children often say:

> "When we grow up, we will be good atheists like S. K." (N. 221.)

4) P. F. Kopaievitch ("Pravda" No. 93, April 28-th), possesses the same qualities.

5) V. M. Malinotchka (village Ternovskoie, Province of Stavropol). Among other things, he

> "systematically studies with other teachers the doctrine of historical materialism, gradually disposing... of the idealistic notions. Before Easter he gave a series of lectures, among others on antireligious subjects and thus in an easy and interesting way exposed the cunning devices of the priests."

Besides,

> "he took an active part in the organisation and carrying out of the Komsomol Easter whereas other educational workers were on the side of the clerical deceivers." (N. 222.)

6) P. I. Vorona, in charge of the Home for the Red Soldiers' children in Krementchug, possesses all the qualities that are requiered from the "best teacher". The result of his work is

> "an enormous change in the mentality of the children... They have become anti-Christians and atheists." (N. 223.)

7) G. A. Lossev (of Nikitovsky Practical Agricultural School in the Don Coalfields) is also qualified for the title of the best teacher. He shows a great zeal in posting antireligious placards in the village. Thus

> „two posters are displayed near the Church gate. They read: "Comrades! Do not go to the Church, go to the People's House instead. There you will hear the truth about God!" (N. 224.)

8) F. D. Dragoonov (Slobodsko - Kusmitchevsky school, Province of Gomel):

> "Shows extraordinary energy as far as antireligious propaganda is concerned... Antireligious meetings, lectures and discussions, organised by comrade Dragoonov in the course of the last 5 years have led to the fact that the local priest is now living in the keeper's lodge. His house, his garden and his kitchen-garden have been given to the school, while the deacon's house has been taken over by Komsomol and his kitchen-garden divided." (N. 225.)

9) S. I. Nisiaev (in charge of the Children's Home in Moscow) possesses all the necessary qualities:

> "Political work occupies the foremost place in the Home. In various circles the children are learning the proper materialistic way of

looking at the things... Antireligious propaganda is going on very successfully... The circle called "Communistic Labour" is especially active."

Paragraph 2 of its statute mentions as one of the aims of the circle:

"the emancipation of mankind from social and religious prejudices."

"The children are talking of the substitution of Christmas and Easter by October and March holidays." (N. 226.)

10) V. L. Zvierintzev (in charge of a factory school in Petrograd) possesses similar qualities. (N. 227.)

11) V. V. Gorokhov (in charge of a labour commune for adolescents in the District of Bogorodsk, Province of Moscow)

"All his pupils have become thorough atheists." (N. 228.)

12) G. M. Kreiditch (in charge of a technical school in Rogatchev) possesses similar qualities. (N. 229.)

13) S. M. Strunnikov (Kokurinovsky school, District of Mtsensk, Province of Orel). Under the influence of his educational methods,

"the younger generation thinks it ridiculous to wear crosses and icons and to go to church on holy days... The only holidays

that are kept in the school are the revolutionary ones... All religious processions in the village have been abolished." (N. 230.)

The number of suchlike candidates for the title of the "best teacher in the Soviet Republic" is rather large. This is to be explained both by general moral degradation and by pecuniary advantages.

We will also mention as an example a certain Mr. B. Schwartzmann who was recommended in the best teacher competition for the following reason: the children's (Jewish) settlement under the charge of Mr. Schwartzmann had "one peculiarity which was not to be met anywhere else: boys and girls under 12 years had common dormitories." (N. 231.)

Facts and figures published recently testify to the general moral and physical degradation of the growing generation. Numerous cases have been registered of children of both sexes between 10 and 15 years old suffering from venereal diseases. In the spreading of them and in general fostering of immorality a large rôle is played by the Komsomol clubs.

We cannot also pass in silence the fact of the splitting of many a family upon religious grounds. The following two descriptions will serve as good examples:

1) A conversation between the parents and the son boastingly reported by the latter in "Pravda":

The parents ask for permission to hang an icon on the wall:

(Parents): No, no. Whatever you say, we must hang it. It is a holiday, and the priest will come to hold a thanksgiving service. We can't do without icons.

(Son): I have nothing to do with the priest. And all your gods have flown away. They saw that something was wrong down here and departed hastily.

— Oh, you wretched Nicolas — said the mother wiping the tears with her skirt... Didn't your friends go to the Holy Communion to-day?

— Those are no friends of mine that go to the Communion. You are mistaken.

— And if you die, what shall we do? Just bury you like a dog?... Perhaps your wife wants to pray?

— Let her, but not before the icons...

— Both you and your wife are lost sheep, I see. She doesn't go to Church either — continued to wail the old hags.

And as they went away wiping their tears I began to hang up the new pictures". (N.232.)

2) A flapper narrates to her friends in the Club of Komsomol during the antireligious demonstrations:

"— If you knew what a scolding I had yesterday for the "Godless".[1]) As I got tired of it I lay down dressed as I was and fell asleep. Mother did not wake me up till

[1]) An atheist magazine.

morning. She said: "'tis better you slept instead of reading the "Godless". Don't dare any more to bring such filth into my house or I'll throw you out with it." So we live in two halves. The old ones in their own way, and we in our way. They have priests and tapers and books about salvation of souls, whereas we have got the portrait of Lenin, the "Red Sprouts"[1]), the "Godless"...

The author who reports this conversation in the official publication adds:

"In many a family the relations between the old and the young ones have become very acute in connection with Easter. The elders cannot get used to the fact that the young ones don't fast during Lent, nor go to the Easter service preferring to attend the godless meetings in the club." (N. 233.)

The conflicts transcend sometimes the limits of the family. In some cases people go so far as to seek legal defence in Soviet courts. The official "Izvestia" prints the report of such a case that took place in Oriekhovo-Zuevo:

"The workers of the local factories live in huge blocks of barracks. There are icons on the walls in corridors and in dining-halls. The members of Komsomol, after their Christmas, decided that those icons were quite super-

[1]) A children's magazine.

fluous. So they took them away... In order to avoid a great noise, they did it secretly in the night... In other barracks where the icons were not yet taken away they were hidden by the believers who kept them in their own rooms under personal guard. The youth was brought to trial on the charge of interfering with religious tolerance...

"... The Court acquitted them and the accused recited on the spot:

"Religion is the opium of the people." (N. 234.)

The main hotbeds of moral and physical corruption of children who are trained in the spirit of new communistic morals, are, alongside with the above-mentioned "Unions of Communistic Youth", the party and the factory school, the village nuclei etc. Below are some incomplete data illustrating the growth of those establishments:

"beside the Sverdlov University, there are permanent provincial party schools in about 40 provinces with over 7000 pupils and district schools in about 50 districts of the Soviet Republic." (N. 235.)

"In 1921 there were 43 factory schools, in August 1922 — 524 schools with 35,000 pupils, now (December 1922) there are 50,000 pupils. In Moscow factory schools number 73 with a total of 6000 pupils." (N. 236.)

The number of the "village nuclei" in the provinces of Archangel, Kursk, Simbirsk and Rybinsk was at the end of 1921 as follows:

> "Province of Archangel: 193 village nuclei, 1573 members.
>
> Province of Kursk: 3000 members.
>
> Province of Simbirsk: from 2941 to 3868 members.
>
> Province of Rybinsk: 2392 members." (N. 237.)

How energetic was the Government in trying to implant suchlike establishments wherever it could, may be judged from the following characteristic piece of information published by "Izvestia" and referring to the inauguration of the Komsomol nuclei among the aboriginal population in the remote parts of the Caucasus. It is thus pompously worded:

> "The Komsomol nuclei are spreading wide in the mountains of Dagestan, Inghushetia, Kabarda and Chechnia — on those outskirts of the Caucasus 3792 members of Komsomol are zealously helping to implant civilisation (?) and to build up the socialistic republic." (N. 238.)

The attitude of the large masses of population towards the young miscreants and their organisations is the same everywhere. The following trustworthy items of information taken from the Russian papers abroad may serve as example:

1) "On January 6-th new style, which corresponds to the Russian Christmas Eve, the Union of Communistic Youth of Poltava organised a carnival procession with anti-religious emblems. As the procession passed by, the gates of the houses were locked and the lights put out. The procession (there were also some drunkards in it) went from the centre of the town to the outskirts where it demanded that it should be let into houses in order to sing carols, and threatened with reprisals to anyone who did not obey. The indignated workers quickly organised themselves and offered an opposition. The quarrel ended in a row and a fight: the communists were beaten. The battle was stopped by the interference of the local military detachements." (N. 239.)

2. "In Ostrov the members of Komsomol entered the Church during Easter service talking loudly, with cigarettes in their mouths, their hats on. Their behaviour provoked the indignation on the part of those present and they tried to expel the intruders. But the spies from the Extraordinary Commission were on their guard, and consequently several people were arrested on the spot and imprisoned." (N. 240.)

The communist press admits that even among the semi-wild tribes of the Caucasus

"the attitude of the population towards Komsomol is tinged with a certain traditional contempt" . . .

Moreover,

"the worst thing is that frequently that contempt is shared by the local communists." (N. 241.)

Even the young people look with hostility upon the dregs of society which form the mainstay of Komsomol. The official organ of the Government in one of its correspondences speaks of the young village bourgeois who use every occasion

"to take their revenge on the members of Komsomol, saying: "Either you quit your Komsomol or we will kill you." (N. 242.)

Yet the Government does everything that lies in its power to increase the number of those nuclei, showing an unparalleled energy in this direction. It is enough to say that in order to entice the children who did not belong to Komsomol into its sphere of influence 26 public reunions were arranged in Moscow at Easter time at which the children were given the opportunity to dance and to have a good time in general. As the official organ puts it:

"The Moscow Committee of Komsomol is organising at Easter time 26 public reunions in the clubs of Moscow for non-party young

people, at which lectures and discussions on religious subjects will be held. Besides, sectional meetings will be held in all sections of the towns." (N. 243.)

An attempt to save the wretched children and to show them what is right requires in those conditions a genuine heroism and a deep feeling of Christian duty. Yet such attempts are made in spite of all the risks they involve. One of them is reported, by way of denonciation of course, by the communist press itself. It is the story of a priest in Kostroma who continuously endeavoured to exert his influence over the young debaucheers of Komsomol. Not being entitled to enter their club he used to come to the window to lecture them.

"... So he used to come to the windows and hold long orations about various heavenly advantages. The lads got cross with him but nothing helped: he went on coming and drumming into their ears."

Then the young hooligans stuck a poster at the window with a filthy and offensive inscription adding that anyone who tore off that poster would be regarded as guilty of a counter-revolutionary action.

"Since then — adds the communist organ triumphantly — the "holy father" did not come any more." (N. 243 a.)

CHAPTER VII.

Corruption of the family. Destruction of the religious basis in the army. Opposition of the population.

The cleavage between the elder and the younger generations represents but a part of a vast plan drawn up by the atheist propagandists for the destruction of the family.

As we know well the cornerstone of that plan is the proposed annihilation of all the elementary foundations of religion, law and custom upon which marriage is built in all civilized countries. Precisely against marriage as the main foundation of the family were directed the first blows of the antireligious propagandists. They took the form of a series of legal measures which had to provide for an absolute freedom of marriage and divorce. The statistical data show clearly the results obtained in this respect. They are best illustrated by the governmental acts and decisions. The following of them may serve as examples:

1) "Concerning the divorces among Red Army Soldiers (Instruction of the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice of November 3-rd 1922, No. 668).

"The soldiers of the 17-th Lancers have appealed to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic with the petition to alter the proceedings of divorce for the men in military service and especially for those on the fighting line, as the divorce can be now granted upon request of one side only without even informing the other side — the man who is absent in the Army — of the proceedings. The men who return home have to accept the divorce as an accomplished fact.

"The fact is that the notice informing the husband of the divorce proceedings begun by the wife reaches the former too late ...

"In view of this Legislative Section of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic requests the Commissariat of Justice to give its opinion whether the exemption cannot be made by which the interests of those soldiers whose normal intercourse with their families has been interrupted by the war would be safeguarded." (May 17/8, 1921, No. 10242).

"In reply to that enquiry the V-th Section sent to the Revolutionary Council the

following conclusion of the Experts' Section of the Commissariat of Justice:

"All the decrees of the Soviet Government relating to the proceedings of divorce are inspired by the idea that to maintain the fiction of family intercourse there where that family intercourse does not exist or is morally impossible, would be tantamount to the violation of the will of both sides. Therefore the Soviet Government maintains the right of each side to annul the marriage by its own declaration in the court. So far no deviations from that principle were tolerated by the Government.

"However reasonable from the practical point of view may be the complaints of the soldiers as to the breaking up of the family during their absence, it appears impossible to support them from the point of view of the existing laws. The more so, since the red soldiers, as the practice of the Commissariat of Justice proves, also largely resort to the law which enables them to divorce their wives whilst away in the Army." (N. 244.)

2) (From the Court practice regarding divorces):
"Protocol No. 24:

"The Smolensk local Land Court Commission under the chairman Bondarev, the members Ivan Turchanov and Michael Tafan.

"The suitor, Maria Nazarenko, and the respondent, Grigory Nazarenko, were present in the Court; the witness, Daria Sinitzina, was absent.

"In the name of the R. S. F. S. R. we, the members of the land court commission, have heard the lawsuit of Maria Nazarenko against Grigory Nazarenko and the deposition of Sinitzina, and, taking in account the loose morals of the village youth who out of sheer egotism take in marriage several wives and then divorce them upon the slightest pretext, thus contributing towards the general depravation and leaving the young women without a material support, — have decreed, for the sake of putting an end to the manifestations of immorality and as a warning to the village youth, to leave the house and the property, together with the sowing area, to Maria Nazarenko as testified by the receipt of Grigory Nazarenko."

(Follow signatures.) (N. 245.)

3) (Concerning marriages between close relations):

"A certain Aristov (from the Province of Briansk) has applied for permission to marry the daughter of his father's brother (i. e. his cousin). The V-th Section replied to the petitioner that "among the reasons mentioned in the decree concerning civil marriage

(No. 11, 1917) the aforesaid relationship is not mentioned, and therefore the Marriage and Birth Registry has no right to refuse the satisfaction of the petitioner's request. (September 24-th, 1920, No. 138)." (N. 246.)

4) Extremely interesting and characteristic is the reply of the V-th Section dated September 20-th 1920 to the inquiry of the Viatka Provincial Department of Justice of September 18-th 1920:

"The Viatka Provincial Department of Justice has telegraphed as follows to the Commissariat of Justice:

'The clergy refuses to sanctify the marriages in case there has been only a civil divorce. Conflicts are arising. What is to be done?

"The V-th Section replied:

"A minister of worship, just as any other citizen of Soviet Republic, is liable to be brought to trial in the Popular Court if he disparages the meaning of the decree concerning civil marriage or the decision of the Court for thus he compromises the Soviet Government and contributes to the disorganisation of life in the Soviet Republic." (N. 247.)

That reply shows clearly that the Soviet Government looks upon civil marriage not as an institution

ensuring personal freedom, but as a means for combatting the Church, its conceptions of morality and its traditions. No country where civil marriage is obligatory makes it a duty of the priest to confirm the validity of the civil marriage by a religious ceremony, and the refusal of such confirmation is nowhere looked upon as compromising for the Government. Where civil marriage is obligatory, the Church marriage is not valid without the former. But the Soviet Government imposes the Church marriage under conditions which are not acceptable to the Church. It applies direct violence.

The number of divorces among the village population which was formerly very small has grown exceedingly. According to the "Pravda"

> "it is easy to come across the cases of women marrying several times in one year. The same is true of the men: to-day one is married, to-morrow — a bachelor, the day after to-morrow — again married." (N. 248.)

Special commissions are busy drawing up instructions which tend towards further destruction of the family, As recently as September 1923 official "Izvestia" reported:

> "... a new draft of the family law has been elaborated by a special commission. According to it, it is proposed that in case it will be established that other persons, besides the one who is named for the child's father, were in

intimate relations with the child's mother at the time of the conception, those other persons will be regarded as co-respondents and will have to bear part of the expenses in connection with the birth of the child and the maintenance of it and the mother." (N. 249.)

That the Soviet Government and the Communist Party that stands behind it regard the religious feelings of the population as of no importance whatever may be seen from the Soviet press itself.

Thus the "Godless" (No. 2) writes, e. g.

"The comrades are reading while in the corners there hang icons. Some even say: I am atheist, but my mother, my uncle, my wife are devotees, what can I do with them. The answer is: pay no attention to them. The room is yours and you can throw all the idols away, and not listen to all the aunts and old hags..." (N. 250.)

The results of those advices are also clear from the communist press. Here is an example:

"A dialogue between two communists.

— Well, how are you? Have you removed the icon, or doesn't your wife allow it?

— No, the other day I told the father to remove it from my side to his... He did not say anything... And I daren't do it

myself. He 'd cut off my head if I did. He is old and he can stand hours on his knees praying to all the saints... I'd rather go to the trenches again, than attempt such thing...

— The same thing with the women... I wish they 'd leave it...

— Certainly... The other day a man like us, a house commissary, said to me: 'Yesterday evening I removed the icons, but to-day I came and everything was just as before, only the icons were even better fastened... It is near to a fight between us... My wife demands divorce. 'Go to devil, she says, with your commissaries and leave alone my saints'... and so on." (N. 251.)

The cases of an energetic opposition on the part of the population are frequently registered even in the Soviet press although it prefers to keep silent about such facts. The following examples show that that opposition manifests itself upon various occasions:

1) The Zadonsk correspondent of the "Izvestia" narrates some curious observations with regard to the religious life and antireligious propaganda in the district. "It is hard, he says, to find a communist in our village who has not got an icon in his house... When a communist marries, the whole wedding procession goes to the Church. First comes a ban-

ner bearing the inscription: "Proletarians of all countries unite yourselves!", then come the icons, then the bridegroom with an enormous red tie etc. Such red weddings are becoming customary in our village." (N. 252.)

2) The "Nijegorodsky Commune" reports that in village Slobodskoie a son has been born to a member of the local Committee of the Communist Party. According to the wish of his father he was not baptized. He was only registered in the local Soviet and called Leo. All the neighbours and especially the women got awfully flurried at the fact that the boy was not baptized and at the strange name that has been given to him. The wife and the family of the communist could not make a single step without being reminded of it. Everyone wanted to prick somehow those who had the courage to break off with the old traditions. Once the mother of the child asked some girl to wash the child's things. All the women of the village flung themselves on the girl: don't dare to wash for the heathen"... (N. 253.)

3) Among the workmen we come across the same attitude:

"At the Reutov spinning works there was a room for prayers... It was closed and turned into dining hall in spite of the loud protest of some workers." (N. 254.)

All manifestations of faithfulness to the creed of the forefathers meet with mockery on the part of the Government agents. The following characteristic scene is mentioned in the description of the handing over of the Batoum Cathedral to Komsomol:

> "An old woman, in a lace shawl, wants to speak and approaches the chairman's table with a firm intention to suffer for her faith. This martyr is met with laughter and cries such as:
>
> — Enough of discussions!
>
> — Vote the resolution!
>
> Another old woman at the entrance is in great flurry and emotion.
>
> — O Lord! — exclaims she — What shall I do? To whom shall I pray?
>
> — Pray to me... am I worse than a god? — replies a tall red-haired worker laughingly.
>
> A loud giggle accompanies his words..." (N. 255.)

Nothwithstanding all that the opposition of all classes of the population is very strong. Even the official organs cannot help referring to it sometimes. Thus "Izvestia" say:

> "For an inhabitant of the town it is hard even to imagine how deeply rooted are the prejudices even in the large industrial centres. Only two miles separate Novo-Bielitza from Gomel, but if you touch in Novo-Bielitza upon

the questions of religion you will soon see in what depth of darkness and ignorance you are.

"They don't want to listen to any arguments and are easily carried — especially the women — to the fits of hysterics. If such an attitude towards antireligious propaganda is found among the working women who often attend the meetings and go to the club, what is to be expected from the workers' wives who participate but feebly in public life."

The author of this correspondence ends by saying:

"Drunkenness and religion — are the two damned problems of the majority of small industrial places." (N. 256.)

In conclusion it must be said that those cases as well as 1414 bloody protests and excesses registered by the official press and mentioned above (see No. 70) are but examples of the opposition — both passive and active — of the population to the antireligious policy of the Soviet Government. A good many similar cases do not even transpire in the press.

CHAPTER VIII.

Methods of antireligious propaganda.

The resistance offered by the population, the blood that was spilt and the tears that were shed could not deter the Soviet Government from accomplishing the task it had set to itself. The numerous cases of resistance and opposition only made it still more fanatical and ruthless in carrying out that task. It began to look for the best means for complete eradication of the religious spirit.

In the organ of the V-th Section which has been already quoted above we read:

> "If during the military period in the life of our republic the Disestablishment of the Church had to be put off to the background... now that view has become obsolete.
>
> "In the first instance it was necessary to create a pliable and elastic apparatus which would enable the V-th Section to regulate the

work of the local organs, to do away with the existing variances and to prevent such anomalities as were described above.[1])

"With that aim in view the V-th Section has worked out a scheme of organisation which is at present being carried into life." (N. 257.)

In that scheme it is said:

„All the practical measures in connection with the Disestablishment of the Church are entrusted to the Departments of Administration, the Department of Justice retaining but general leading and instructing rôle. The existing sub-sections dealing with liquidation of churches are to be closed. The carrying out of the decree with regard to the Church is entrusted to the general sub-sections of the Provincial Departments of Justice which must have a special instructor in each province who will deal with the questions of Disestablishment and be personally responsible to the V-th Section for the whole province. The appointment of such an instructor must be approved by the Provincial Executive Committee with the consent of V-th Section.

"In order to coordinate the work of various departments special commissions consisting of representatives of the Department of Justice, the Department of Administration and

the Provincial Extraordinary Commission are to be appointed in all provinces. They may coopt the representatives of other departments for the solution of sundry questions. The copies of their minutes have to be sent to the V-th Section.

"The V-th Section is at present engaged in verifying the agreements concluded with the groups of citizens.

"In view of the fact that in many provinces the handing over of churches to the groups of citizens has not yet been effected and that in some places the chairmen of the local executive committees, sometimes with the knowledge of the Provincial Department of Justice, have resorted to intentional ***sabotage*** which is the result of their religious and political convictions — several over-religious chairmen of the local executive committees who have become playthings in the hands of the cunning churchmen, have been brought to trial..." (N. 258.)

The "ideological" part of the scheme was drawn up with the usual cynicism by a certain Stepanov in his "Tasks and methods of antireligious propaganda". Below are some extracts from this work which has been highly recommended by the Government and by the communist press:

"... Since the time when the class war of the Russian proletariat has become a di-

rect struggle for socialism our antireligious propaganda has turned its front against God instead of the priestcraft.

"The original character of the struggle was determined not by us, but by the general political conditions. But even if the choice of the direction of the first blows rested with us we ought to have had directed them — for educational purposes — against the clergy, doing it so as to get the villages also mixed in the struggle.

"We must act so that every blow — be it against the holy shrines, the miraculous icons, the prayers for rain, or against any elements of creed and canons, against the traditional structure of the Church, against the clergy and its class privileges — should become a blow against religion in general.

"It would be bad for us, if faith having discarded some of its equipment should entrench itself upon a new, less vulnerable position. We must see to it that the entire ship of faith should sink at once.

"Our propaganda literature is still in embryonic state. It hardly develops. We can hardly count a dozen of suitable leaflets. That must not be so. If our comrades, for instance, would turn to hagiographic literature they would find the richest, though very monotonous and extremely tedious, material for

very useful and curious narratives about the men whom the Church has canonised... the men whose entire merit consisted in the fact that they were "much tempted by the devil", i. e. by their own desires which they unnaturally suppressed.

"We must undertake energetic measures for the dissemination of such literature. We must sell those books cheaply so that they would reach the very lowest mass of readers. They must be sold in all bookstalls, markets, village fairs, etc. It would be very useful to give a try to the proposal made by comrade Sariabinov in "Pravda": to sell antireligious literature at reduced prices at the entrance to all lectures upon religious subjects.

"If our leaflets, papers and the magazine "The Godless" come into the hands of young people or factory workers, it isn't much... those people are already irreligious in a sufficient degree.

"I will say in this connection that the right way to organise the antireligious lectures is to make entrance free without any tickets. When the tickets are being sold through the factory committees and other party and professional organisations the result is that the audience consists chiefly of people who have already done away with religion whereas we must turn over still deeper layers...

"Every such lecture provokes a storm of oral and written questions... We see then that the soil is already well prepared for our antireligious propaganda, that the religious conceptions are shattered.

"... the main part of this work — in fact, nearly all of it — we could entrust to the experts, to the good teachers of the secondary schools, who have modern brains, to the university lecturers, physicians, technicians etc. To ourselves we shall leave the general leadership and the control in the matter.

"By extending the galaxy of lecturers we could increase the number of lectures and arrange them in "batches". They must be organised on an all-Russian scale. A special board of instructors ought to be created at the Central Office of Propaganda. On going to the provincial towns they must arrange conferences with the local experts chosen from the aforesaid professions, and settle upon what lines the work is to be organised. Then the visiting lecturer must give a lecture upon religious subjects, which is to be followed by a "batch" of lectures about natural history ...

"Science must be made to collide with faith, to fight against it, to sweep away all the rubbish which the mankind has been carrying with it throughout its history.

"We must repeat again and again that our progress will be very slow so long as the chairs of history of religions in our universities remain vacant. Following courses of lectures are absolutely indispensable: primitive religion, ancient Eastern religions, religions of Greece and Rome, old Israelite religion, the origine of Christianity and its later history... So long as scientific history of religion has no place in our universities, our antireligious propaganda cannot be a succes, we are bound to commit frequent blunders...

"It is high time we discussed such a reform of our calendary as will abolish all the religious holidays and establish new ones; not the Mohammedan Friday or Jewish Sabbath, or Christian Sunday, Christmas, Easter, Ascension etc., but something quite new." (N. 259.)

Such is then the programme of the militant atheism.

In the leading paper of the Communist Party we find the following appreciation of it:

"Our programme establishes clearly the attitude towards religious and Church problems... We must bear in mind that the Russian Communist Party has nothing whatever in common with any religious denomination. Communism, if it wants to be consequential

and true to itself, i. e. really scientific communism, can be as little fitted to the most liberal protestantism, as to the most hidebound orthodoxy . . ." (N. 260.)

The main task is to carry out that programme with regard to the large classes of the population since

"among the peasants religion is more deeply rooted than autocracy."

Therefore,

"it must be unrooted with greatest skill and extreme care." (N. 261.)

Turning now to the actual execution of those measures we notice that the first place among them is occupied by oral propaganda of atheism by various means. The following items of information taken from the communist press may serve as exemples:

"Gomel, February 15-th. — The local conferences in the district of Klintsov devoted their entire attention to the struggle against religious prejudices. In some cases the question about the existence of God was put to voting. In the district of Starodub trials of deities were organised at Christmas time." (N. 262.)

"In the Saransky butter-factory No. 28, a lecture on the subject "Religion and science" was organised." (N. 263.)

"The active group of "The Union of artist" in Voronej is planning out a many-sided programme for the week of propaganda; a number of "living newspapers" will be issued, communications and disputes on "The living church" subject will take place, with a discussion on different sects etc.

"A plan is being worked out for the organisation of "atheistic nuclei" in secondary schools as well as in universities. Reports have been already received of the foundation of such "nuclei" in the communistic university, in the "rabfak" and in the "pedtechnicum". In the pedagogic technicum with the assistance of the anti-religious society of the Komsomol, a living paper, called "The Young Atheist", was issued, containing articles and news of the day. The reading of the paper attracted many listeners." (N. 264.)

"The propaganda section of the Elabujsky Committee of the Communist party has drawn up the main points of the anti-religious propaganda in connection with the splitting of the Church. In working them out it followed the article of I. Stepanov in the magazine 'The Communistic Revolution' (No. 9—10) and his leaflet 'Concerning the Living Church'." (N. 265.)

"In Tsaritsyn in the Marxist Club a "Live Newspaper" was organised as an item of anti-

religious propaganda. In the "Letter-box" of the said newspaper a lively exchange of opinions was passed." (N. 266.)

"In Charkov, in the House of the Workers, a lecture on the origin of God was given. The entrance was free." (N. 267.)

"In the Trubchevsky club the dispute about "The Living Church" continued for two days. The club proved to be too small to hold all who wished to attend, and therefore the meeting was transferred to the House of Soviets, which also was not big enough to hold all." (N. 268.)

"In the town of Bielov the scientist Khatunsky reads lectures about religion and God." (N. 269.)

"In Viatka comrade Alypov has read a paper to the delegates of the 9th Congress of the Soviets entitled: 'The cleavage inside the Church'. The speaker divided his lecture into three parts:

1) The facts of the cleavage.
2) The causes and the character of it.
3) The attitude of the Soviet Government and the Communist Party towards it.

"His main points were:

"The whole idea of the cleavage is to change colour in order to hold out.

"What we need now is not a reform of the church, but the entire liquidation of it. We do not need any Soviet church at all. Religion only darkens the mind. The "Living church" is still more dangerous than Tikhon. Patriarch Tikhon is a pronounced anti-revolutionary, while these only change colour and try to adapt themselves to the present life." (N. 270.)

The communist papers are full of similar informations which arrive every day from all parts of Russia.

Particular attention is paid by the Government to the propaganda among the Army, especially amongst the newly conscripted peasants between 18 and 20 years of age, three quarters of whom are illiterate.

"In the 33rd Lancers regiment the anti-religious campaign has been started amongst the red army soldiers of non-military age. Comrade Sazonov has opened the campaign with the lecture on the subject "The origin of religions". This lecture is to be followed by a whole cycle of them, all on the subject of religion. They will be given regularly twice a week." (N. 271.)

"Ufa. — At the general meeting of the Red Army soldiers a motion has been carried to the effect of discarding all religion, removing the bells from the churches and handing over the latter to the schools." (N. 272.)

In a telegram from Kazan it is reported that the conference of workers and Red Army soldiers demanded that the holy shrines in the monasteries of Sviajsk and Kazan should be divulged. (N. 273.) etc. etc.

"Pravda" in an article entitled "Red Army soldiers on antireligions front" writes:

"Our ubiquitous Red Army soldiers may be of great use on this new front as well..."

The article goes on to speak of the plan of turning churches into barracks with the aid of the Red Army men, and mentions a case where a church was used as a hall for political meetings.

It is significant that in the concluding part of the article which deals with the attitude of the peasants towards the antireligious manifestations of the village youth the following incident is reported:

"A young Red Army man told me that the other day he did not cross himself before meal and started a discussion with his mother on the subject. She ended this religious dispute by striking him with a hot spoon on his forehead..."

The author of the article concludes by advising the Red Army soldiers

"not to fear their mothers' spoons." (N. 274.)

In many a case the decision to increase the anti-religious propaganda is dictated by the growth of religious feelings in the population. Thus,

> "religious feelings amongst the population of Tuapse have of late considerably increased..."

Therefore —

> "The political secretariat of the Naval Defence in Tuapse has organised a public lecture on the subject "Religion — poison for the people."" (N. 275.)

It goes without saying that the propaganda is not confined to the organisation of lectures and disputes. The following examples show that the Government uses every available means to disseminate antireligious ideas:

> 1) "The local Committee of Vassilievsky Ostrov (in Petrograd) has organised an anti-religious museum." (N. 276.)
>
> 2) "Vologda. — An antireligious dramatic prize competition has been opened here." (N. 277.)
>
> 3) "At the Prokhorov manufactory numbering 6½ thousand workers a newspaper has been issued entitled 'Without God and the master'." (N. 278.)
>
> 4) "Some of the shrines of the Russian saints have been well preserved ... and the

best may be seen in the Museum of the Commissariat of Health." (N. 279.)

As to the publication of the religious writings, it is not formally prohibited, but

> "all the manuscripts of religious character are to be handed to the State Publishing Office prior to their publication." (N. 280.)

What happens to them we do not know. The fact is that whereas the atheistic literature is published in millions copies, there are no religious books on sale.

Sometimes the Government endeavours to keep up at least the appearances of religious tolerance and the wording of some of the instructions and decisions of the V-th Section is full of sophistry and hypocrisy, but the rank and file of the communist party prefer plain speaking. They say:

> "The working masses differ from the peasants and the intellectuals. From their point of view, the more resolute we deal with religion, the better. The stronger we strike, the sooner shall we do away with it..." (N. 281.)

They proclaim openly and cynically:

> "In some towns a campaign for removing icons is being organised." (N. 282.)

They do not stop before burning down churches, or performing sacrilegious plays inside, them, or turn-

ing them into breweries; nor do they stop before shooting thousands of priests and laymen.

"The more resolute we deal with religion — the better" — so they say, and they act up to it.

In the "Times" we find the following interesting piece of information supplied by its Riga correspondent, which illustrates the methods of the Bolshevik anti-religious propaganda:

> "It is hardly to be realized in the Western World that the Russian 'Supreme Church Administration' and 'Living Church Party' are anti-religious Communist organisations designed to exterminate religion in all its forms.
>
> "The facts, however, cannot be too strongly emphasized. Evidence of the ignorance of the ecclesiastical groups outside Russia is provided by the recent decision of the American Methodist Episcopal Church to take part in the coming Church Convocation at Moscow. This convocation will be opened on April 15-th under the auspices of the Soviet Government. In an interview on this subject Archbishop John, head of the Orthodox Church in the Baltic States, severely condemns the decision of the Methodists, which, he insists, is tantamount to assisting the Soviet Government to destroy religion. He says:
>
> "The thirteenth paragraph of the Soviet Constitution enjoins that all citizens must

assist the Government to fight against religion. The so-called 'Living Church', which is arranging for the Convocation, is a State Department subsided by the Soviet. The Methodist Episcopal Church is said to be the wealthiest Church in America, and the Soviet clearly hopes to attract its capital to assist in a general anti-religious campaign in which the 'Living Church' is now engaged."

"The Bolshevists themselves admit that they are making little real progress in their campaign against religion. In order to develop anti-religious propaganda, the Moscow Communist Party is said to have sent atheist workers into the various country districts to organize anti-religious 'circles'. At first these circles were attended by local Communists, and it seemed likely that organized bodies of anti-religionists soon dispersed, and the 'circles' have now almost ceased to exist. A very recent article in 'Pravda' (March 18-th) is significant. It says:

The anti-religious circles must not be allowed to continue in the state. If the development proceeds in this slow rate, it will encourage the birth of all kinds of new religious sects, which will also be an obstacle to our campaign against religion. Why are these circles a *fiasco?* Certainly not because there is no time, but mainly because we

underestimate the importance of anti-religious propaganda. We must carry our agitation against religion just as systematically as we do in political questions, but with even more determination. It must not be a recreation but part of our daily duties. Otherwise there is no sense in anti-religious propaganda at all.

'We must compel suitable comrades to attend these circles and be trained for the campaign. The "Women's Department" and the Communist "Union of Young People" must also give us some of their members for this work.

'The district Commissariat of Podolsk has already consented to compel the attendance of the students at the anti-religious circles. Others must follow suit. This attendance must be a requirement of party discipline ...

'Although we have declared war on the denizens of Heaven, it is by no means easy to sweep them from the households of the workmen. The women, especially, are intractable; they worship before the Holy Ikons and impede the progress of the war on religion. They insist on having their children christened and obstruct the removal of ikons. Our campaign is proceeding nervously. It is necessary to work slowly, word by word, drop by drop, to worm our way and convince the stubborn that by the unwritten decrees of the victorious

proletariat the inhabitants of Heaven and all their attributes have been abolished. With an iron sweeper the workmen must clear their homes of the last vestige of all that is holy'.

"The same newspaper complains that the anti-religious journal "The Atheist", published by the Communist Party, is not being read in the factories. Members of the Communist Union of Young People endeavour to distribute it, but the adult workers declare that 'God will punish those who scoff at Him'.

"Supported by their agents in the "Living Church", the Soviet authorities have in many cases turned religious houses to profane use. Many churches have been turned into headquarters of Communist Clubs. The Synagogue at Orel has been converted into a labour exchange. By order of the town Soviet, the Synagogue at Minsk has become a lecture hall, and a prolonged struggle is taking place for the possession of the Polish Catholic Church." (N. 283.)

In conclusion we must touch — be it but superficially — upon the atheistic literature, its character and its contents. Here it will be also the best way to let the communists speak. "Izvestia" thus describes the organisation and the aims of the first atheistic publishing company and the first atheistic magazine:

"'The Atheist' is a non-party cooperative publishing company. It was organised in February 1922 and professes the views of revolutionary marxism. Two numbers of the magazine called 'The Atheist' have been issued. No. 1 contains the leading article which says:

'Our magazine is meant not for the learned men, nor for the hypocrites and bigots, but for the workers and peasants and for all those who do not want to be counted among parasites . . .'

"The same number contains an article entitled: 'What is the use of Church treasures?' The author reveals the importance of religion to the bourgeoisie, as a means of embezzling the labouring masses, and describes how the overthrown dynasty of Romanovs looked upon the opening of various 'immortal' shrines precisely from this point of view. The greater part of the magazine (No. I) is devoted to the article entitled 'The autumn flies' which reveals financial and ideological identity of the evangelical and baptist preachers in Russia with the American and English milliarders, with Rockfeller, Lloyd George (?) etc. This article contains a rich material as to what those evangelical preachers said in their catechisms, lectures and sermons about the Government when the power belonged to the bourgeoisie, and how they turned their foxes' noses and dogs'tails when the power passed

into the hands of workers and peasants. The materials and the proofs that are adduced leave no escape to those white guard anarchist pilgrims of the heavenly kind[1]).

"Second number of 'The Atheist' contains a large article entitled 'Our corrections to the draft of the Criminal Code as far as ecclesiastical crimes are concerned'. The article gives a large material about the reasons which make the bourgeoisie teach the children so-called religion ...

"... The 'Atheist Publishing Company' has published a tragedy in 3 acts by S. Polianov entitled 'The High Priest Tarquinius' ... It will be given in Moscow in the 'Actor's Theater' conducted by Meyerchold ... as well as in other towns of Russia. It is being translated into White Russian and Armenian ...

"... Number 4 of 'The Atheist' devoted to the 'Living Church' is to appear shortly ...

"... The following publications are in the press: 1) an almanac referring to the Disestablishment of the Church, containing all the decrees and decisions of the Government with regard to the Church and religion; reports of the most important trials of the ecclesiastics; the history of the Church Council (1917—1918); description of the counter-

[1]) Those are literally the epithets used by the author of the article.

revolutionary activities of the abolished Council of religious groups and communities headed by a well-known follower of Tolstoy, V. G. Tchertkov, etc. The compilation of that almanac has been entrusted to comrade Spitzberg. 2) Anathematised Stenka Razin and canonised Ioasaph, the Metropolitan of Astrakhan; ... 4) Patriarch Tikhon, the holy head of counter-revolution; ... 6) Encyclopaedia of atheists ...

"Particular attention will be paid by the 'Atheist' Publishing Company to the publication of antireligious plays for popular theatres ... The "Atheist" has proposed to the Cinema Department to produce an antireligious film entitled "Holy Griasnov" ... Comrade Krupskaia, the Chairman of the Department of Political Education, and comrade Krassikov, in charge of the V-th Section of the Commissariat of Justice, have vouchsafed the great artistic and political significance of that production. Lunatcharsky, the Commissary of Education, also approved of it and directed the Cinema Department to produce that film in the first instance..." (N. 284.)

All sorts of antireligious posters are widely spread. Thus we learn from the magazine called "The Godless" that in its office can be got

"... an antireligious poster (price 3 roubles). It is to be hung on the walls of the communistic nucleis, the factory committees etc. On February 9-th a circular letter has been sent to all the communistic nuclei, containing No. 1 of "The Godless" with a picture which is to be stuck to the poster. In future new pictures and mottos will be sent." (N. 285.)

It is difficult to get any accurate data as to the quantity of atheistic literature issued. Some publications bear the inscriptions which show that up to 25, 50 and even 100 thousand copies of them have been printed. According to the "Church and Revolution" 70,555 copies have been spread in the first year by the V-th Section alone, although

"... it is to be remembred that the demand for literature could not be satisfied to the full in view of the limited resources; often only 50 or even 25 per cent of the demand could be met."

Further we read:

"The editorial work was greatly enlivened by the publication of a wall-newspaper entitled 'The Church and the Revolution'. Immediately a lively intercourse with the country began ...

"The editors received 2456 letters from various places; they bear a valuable testimony

to the feelings of village population in religious matters in 1921."... (N. 286.)

From the same publication we learn that the number of meetings, lectures and discussions organised by the V-th Section alone in the period between January 1-st and December 15-th 1921 amounted to 203 with the total audience numbering 113,400.

What were the results of those antireligious activities? They were proudly enumerated in the official publication:

> "Antireligious work which used to be of more or less casual character, is becoming one of the main branches of our propaganda. In many towns (Iaroslavl, Samara, Astrakhan, Gomel, Viatka, Tambov, Tula) special Marxian circles of advanced type have been created whose task it is to work out the problems of antireligious propaganda (in Moscow there is even an antireligious seminary); they have large non-party audiences. Many other provinces are also starting such circles. Special antireligious circles are also being organised in all clubs and party schools (e. g. in Moscow, Tula, Smolensk, Briansk, Astrakhan)." (N. 287.)

So much about the organisation side. The actual results are also satisfactory:

> "... We have already contributed a good deal to the dissemination of irreligious feel-

ings. It is high time that we thought of transforming mere feelings into irreligious conscience." (N. 288.)

The Government and its satellites who use every means to root out the feeling of devotion and piety, smile contemptously when they come across a fact like this:

"In village Boniatchki (Province of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk) the priest cried during the antireligious dispute"...

But since those tears aroused general sympathy on the part of the peasants, it is thought necessary to add the following "tactical" excuse:

"Of course it is useless to organise disputes among ignorant peasants." (N. 289.)

We may ask then: what is the use of organising votings upon the question of the existence of God among little children (v. N. 213), or illiterate recruits. Obviously it is done for "tactical" reasons, too.

CHAPTER IX.

The case of holy patriarch Tikhon.

The fight against religion and Church in Russia, organised by the Soviet Government upon many lines, found its culminating point in the arrest of the Supreme Head of the Orthodox Church who was thus arbitrarily relegated from his post[1]). In the same way the Roman Catholic Church in Russia was deprived of its spiritual head through the arrest of Archbishop Cepliak whose case will be presented to the reader in the next chapter.

Now, after the liberation of the Patriarch, when so many various explanations as to the reasons of his arrest and subsequent liberation are afloat, it is necessary to be extremely careful in the matter and confine

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[1]) For the first time the question of the abolition of the Patriarch's office and the Church hierarchy in general was raised in the beginning of 1922 at the instignation of Trotsky. The plan was made known to the European public through a telegram of the Polish Telegraphic Agency.

oneself to the documents and proofs whose veracity and clarity are beyond any doubt.

The first news of the serious limitations of the Patriarch's personal freedom came in the beginning of 1919 (February-March). But he was formally arrested and imprisoned, first in a monastery, then in the prison of the State Political Department (S. P. D.), only as late as autumn 1922, when he was accused of the following crimes:

1) that he resisted the saving of the lives of the starving population;

2) that he sympathised with the counter-revolutionary movement during the civil war and supported the counter-revolutionary forces abroad (in particular the political manifestations of the Council of the Russian Church in Karlovatz (in Yougoslavia) in 1922).

The first accusation can be met with the following exhaustive and documental counter-proofs:

1) The appeal of the Patriarch to the Russian people entreating them to do their holy duty and save the starving population.

2) The following resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee which was a direct consequence of the Patriarch's appeal:

> "Resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee:
>
> "Taking in account the numerous petitions of various religious communities asking for

permission to collect donations in favour of the starving population, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee hereby decrees:

1) to allow to the religious administrations and separate religious communities to collect such donations;

2) to propose to the Central Famine Relief Committee to come to an agreement with the religious communities as to the forms of collection and the ways of distribution, taking in account the wish of the donor.

(Signed) Chairman of the A.R.C.E.C. Kalinin

Secretary Enukidze.

Moscow, Kreml, December 9-th 1921." (N. 290.)

As to the Appeal of the Patriarch dated February 28-th and dealing with the spoliation of churches on the plea of "confiscating Church treasures in favour of the starving population", its aim was merely to demand some form of public control over the confiscation so as to prevent any acts of sacrilege. That appeal must be placed side by side with the declaration of the Patriarch himself which appeared in the official organ of the Soviet Government. It was headed "An interview with Patriarch Tikhon" and ran as follows:

"Remembering the commandement of Christ — 'if thou hast two shirts, give one to thy neighbour' — the Church cannot remain indifferent to the great sufferings of the star-

ving people. To those words I referred in my appeal when I entreated to give away the Church treasures in favour of the starving population; this was before the Central Executive Committee passed its resolution to the effect of confiscating gold, silver and precious stones belonging to the Church. In my appeal I enumerated those treasures: hangings, rings, bracelets given for the decoration of icons, various objects which are not used for the service, and old broken silver.

"I hope that the Commission which deals with the confiscation will set out to its work with proper care." (N. 291.)

That declaration which unfortunately remained almost unknown to the European public opinion quite settles the question whether the Patriarch wanted to provoke any excesses by his appeal.

The question whether the Patriarch was justified in demanding the observance of canonic rules and the public control over the confiscation may be best answered by the numerous items of information reproduced above (v. N. N. 25 — 48 etc.). referring to the spoliation of churches, export of treasures abroad, judicial trials etc.

The second category of accusations is just as ungrounded as the first. The attitude of the Patriarch with regard to the civil war was described in the fol-

lowing communiqué based upon the declaration of the former Russian Minister in Belgrad Prince G. N. Trubetzkoy and published in several Russian and foreign newspapers:

> "The bolsheviks are accusing Patriarch Tikhon of supporting counter-revolutionary movement. This accusation is absolutely false. It was precisely the Patriarch who did his best to restrain the Orthodox Church from interfering in the civil war. His attitude towards the Council of Karlovatz which he condemned is well-known. His numerous appeals to the clergy in Russia forbidding them to mix up in politics are also known. But there is a fact which still more clearly characterises the attitude of the Patriarch in this question. This fact remained unknown till now and I deem it my duty to make it public. As a participator of the ‚White' movement I visited Patriarch Tikhon and begged him to bestow his blessing — be it only secretly — upon the White armies. I was to carry his blessing to the Don Region and I gave him the guarantee that the secret would be kept. I tried to persuade the Patriarch to consent to it, as I knew that his blessing would have greatly improved the spirit of the Army. He was however not to be shaken in his conviction that the clergy ought to keep out of politics and political struggle." (N. 292.)

This communiqué led to a circumstantial explanation of Prince Trubetzkoy himself which was published in the Russian newspaper "Rul" in the form of a letter to its editor. We give it below *in extenso:*

> "In No. 791 of the "Rul", of July 8-th, an interview with me was published under the heading "Patriarch Tikhon and the White movement." I feel therefore necessary to state that I never gave anybody the right to make any public declarations on my behalf. About two months ago, at the request of the Vienna representative of the 'Russpress' Agency, I imparted to him some information — to be used only as general material — about Patriarch Tikhon, which was to prove how false and untenable was the accusation of having mixed politics in Church affairs, brought against him by the bolsheviks. In the narrative of my visit to the Patriarch before going to the South, at the beginning of the White movement, I must correct one essential inaccuracy. I did not ask the Patriarch to bestow his blessing to the Volunteer Army and His Holiness need not have refused to give it, but I asked His Holiness for permission to give his blessings to one of the eminent leaders of the White movement on the condition that the whole thing would be kept in secret. The Patriarch, however, did not see

his way to do even that — which shows once more that he kept aloof from all politics.

"A year later, in his pastoral Encyclic dated September 25-th (the memorial day of St. Sergius) the Patriarch imposed upon the clergy the duty to stand aloof from civil war. I remember that the Patriarchal Encyclic rather grieved us, i. e. those who stood round the Volunteer Army, at the time, but later on I could not help admiring his wisdom and restraint: for wherever the bishops and the priests held thanksgiving services on the occasion of the victorious progress of the Volunteer Army, they were later on compelled to share the fate of the Army and leave their flocks to the great detriment of the Church cause.

"Having had the occasion, in my capacity of the member of the Moscow Church Council of 1917—1918, to know Patriarch Tikhon personally, I feel in duty bound to add my feeble voice to the recent pastoral address of Metropolitan Eulogius who warned us all against believing all too hastily the news that comes through the Soviet press about the new declarations ascribed to Patriarch Tikhon. Granted his extraordinary gentleness and mildness, — the qualities which lend such a charm to his personality, — the Patriarch always impressed those who knew him as one

who would readily bear his cross. He did not care about his personal fate, but he always grieved for his subordinates and his spiritual children. He accepted his office as a cross, and bore it as a pastor who is doomed to do his duty and is foreign to any personal considerations.

"Those who saw the Patriarch on the memorable day of his election and preferment, can never forget his meekness and his humble gentleness; nor can the bolsheviks efface this image by their 'revelations'. They have a means to make everyone believe them. Let them fulfil the demand of the Russian and the foreign press and give the Patriarch real, not illusory, freedom. Until we see the Holy Father and hear from his own mouth the words that are ascribed to him, we shall believe them as little as we believed at the time the false rumour of his abdication and of the transfer of ecclesiastical authority to the self-appointed administration of the 'Living Church'.

"I beg the papers which printed the information of the "Russpress" to print also this letter of mine.

Member of the All-Russian Council in Moscow

Prince Gregory Trubetzkoy.

July 12-th, 1923." (N. 293.)

Yet the Commissary of Justice, Kursky, thought it possible to declare in the interview with the foreign correspondents that

> "Patriarch Tikhon did not deny that he was in contact with the counter-revolutionary groups abroad and that he approved of the Church Council in Karlovatz with a monarchist programme." (N. 294.)

Notwithstanding the obvious falsity of those accusations the Soviet Government went so far as to arrest the Patriarch precisely upon those charges.

Simultaneously the press as well as various Government agents started a fierce campaign against the helpless prisoner. Communist Krylenko, who was appointed by the Government to conduct the case of the Patriarch, declared to the representatives of the various provincial organisations who came to Moscow to present the resolutions demanding the death sentence upon the Patriarch:

> "The fate of citizen Tikhon is in our hands and you may be sure that we shall not be merciful to this representative of the classes which throughout centuries oppressed the Russian people and still think of resisting the sovereign will of the Russian proletariat. The Soviet Government is resolved upon meeting any attempts of that kind with a most energetic counter-attack. It will be ruthless and

will know no mercy upon anyone. The proletariat must hold the positions it won. At the present moment one of the main things is the fight against religious prejudices and the blind fanaticism of the masses. We have declared a war upon religion, a war upon all religious denominations whatever they are. The Russian people must free themselves from this last yoke" ... (N. 295.)

At the same time all over Russia the communists began a fierce propaganda among the ignorant masses and the dregs of society, making them pass resolutions which demanded a death sentence for the Patriarch. The abundance of those resolutions did not disconcert the communists, on the contrary they declared boastingly:

> "Numerous resolutions of the clergy *(sic!)* which condemn the Patriarch even before the trial took place both as a traitor to the Church and as a counter-revolutionary criminal, are the best answer to the barking dogs of the White guards who of course would have long ago become silent had they any other means to fight the Soviet Government." (N. 296.)

We need not reproduce *in extenso* those filthy resolutions. One example will be enough to show what they are like. Here is the beginning of the resolution passed, it is alleged, by the peasants of the community of Zagarsk and published in "Izvestia":

"We, the non-party peasants of the community of Zagarsk, having received the news of the coming trial of Patriarch Tikhon, declare that he is a blood-sucker clad in clerical habit, a counter-revolutionary and an anthropophagus... We demand from the central Soviet Government that the blood-sucker Patriarch Tikhon be severely and ruthlessly punished." (N. 297.)

By suchlike resolutions it was apparently meant to undermine the authority of the clergy and of the Patriarch himself and to terrorise them. It must be however stated that this end was not achieved. On the contrary the sufferings of the Patriarch provoked everywhere ardent sympathy and admiration. At this time the Government deemed it opportune to make use of the cleavage inside the Church which already began to be observed.

Stil earlier, even before the Patriarch was completely deprived of personal freedom, viz. on May 12-th 1922, he was made to hand over the supreme ecclesiastical authority to another person. The conditions under which his consent to this act was extorted are as yet obscure. "Izvestia" thus reported this fact in the issue of May 13-th:

"On May 12-th a group of clergymen consisting of Fathers Vvedensky, Krassnitsky, Kalinovsky, Bielkov and psalmodist Stadnik

visited Patriarch Tikhon in his appartments and had a long interview with him.

"Having pointed out to the recent trial in the Moscow Provincial Military Tribunal which passed 11 death sentences for resistance to the confiscation of Church treasures, the group of clergymen declared that it held the Patriarch morally responsible for the blood that was spilt, because of the proclamation of February 28-th[1]).

"In the opinion of the group of clergymen that proclamation was a signal for the new outburst of civil war between the Church and the Soviet Government in which the leadership belonged to the Church hierarchy."

Then followed the accusations against the Patriarch which were mentioned above, and the official organ resumed as follows:

"... The group of clergymen demanded that the Patriarch should call a council to discuss the organisation of the Church, and that he himself should withdraw temporarily until some decision is arrived at by that council. After some deliberation the Patriarch wrote the text of abdication handing over his authority to one of the supreme hierarchs of the Church." (N. 298.)

The causes which made the Patriarch sign his abdication are not known. In this connection the

[1]) See above pp. 172—173.

Russian newspaper published in Paris ("Les Dernières Nouvelles") wrote:

> "We reported the other day that the execution of the death sentence against 11 persons who were condemned for resisting the confiscation of Church treasures has been temporarily suspended. Is that fact in any way connected with the abdication of Patriarch Tikhon? Was not his consent dictated by the threat that otherwise the condemned would be shot?" (N. 299.)

The Patriarch appointed the Archbishop of Iaroslavl, Agathangelos, who is 70 years old, to be his interim successor. The latter remained in the office only a few months. As may be seen from the telegram published in chapter III Archbishop Agathangelos was sentenced to hard labour and sent to the North of Russia.

Official "Izvestia" thus sums up the results of this policy:

> "In the Ukraine the three Churches are fighting against each other: the dead, the living and the followers of Petliura ...
>
> "In Kiew the followers of Tikhon have gathered round the Metropolitan Michael. Proclamations were printed in the Kievo-Petschersky Lavra[1]) urging the people to rise

[1]) The famous monastery.

against the Soviet Government. Michael and his satellites were sent to Moscow. Among the arrested were several bishops who are avowed and active enemies of the Soviet Government. In the province of Tchernigov father Soloviev and his followers assaulted the priest Iartchukov who belongs to the "Living Church" and began to beat him. Iartchukov hid behind the altar and defended himself with a heavy iron cross until the latter broke in two. Then Iartchukov was pushed to the middle of the church and trodden down. The militia came in time and dispersed the followers of Tikhon. In Kharkov these latter still mention Tikhon's name during the service thus throwing an open challenge to the Soviet Government. The Ecclesiastical Administration of the Ukraine forbade it, but the followers of Tikhon continue their work. Several clergymen have been dismissed. In Kharkov Tikhon's nest is rooted out: 16 priests with bishop Paul at their head have been arrested. They will be banished from the Ukraine . . ." (N. 299a.)

A few lines below it is reported:

"In the Kuban region the case of the followers of Tikhon with bishop Eusebius at their head is being heard. There are 19 accused: 5 clergymen, a teacher, a few tradesmen etc. (N. 300.)

Not being content with the success it has attained as the result of the arrest of the Patriarch, the Soviet Government called at the beginning of May 1923 a Church Council consisting of obedient clergymen and laymen. By means of extremely cynical devices all the undesirable candidates were eliminated during the elections and the result was that the Council which was nicknamed "the Red Council" passed a series of resolutions which contributed to the deepening of the cleavage. By one of them the Patriarch was relegated from his office and unfrocked. This resolution was carried contrary to all canonic rules in the absence of the Patriarch who was not even summoned to give his explanation. The real meaning of it was to enable the Government to try the Patriarch as a layman. Of course the Patriarch did not recognise the validity of this resolution.

In order to appreciate fully the moral value of this resolution and the moral weight of the "Red Council" itself it is enough to read the following greeting sent by the Council which called itself ecclesiastical to the man who stands at the head of militant atheism:

> "The Second Council of the Russian Orthodox Church inaugurating its work expresses its thanks to the All-Russian Executive Committee for permission which enabled the elected sons of the Church to assemble for the discussion of important problems. At the same time it sends its greetings to the Supreme

organ of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and to V. I. Lenin.

"The great October Revolution has carried into life, through the medium of the State, the lofty principles of equality and labour which are also contained in the Christian doctrine...

"The Council wishes for a speedy recovery of V. I. Lenin who will again join the ranks of the fighters for lofty social ideals." (N. 301.)

In order to characterize the moral weight of the leaders of the "Red Council" it is enough to reproduce the following words of Father Vvedensky:

"We must convey our deep thanks to the Government which, contrary to the slandering voices of the scandalmongers abroad, does not persecute the Church. In Russia every one may have his convictions. Our thanks are due to the only Government in the world which, without believing, contributes to the cause of love while we, the believers, do not do it, as well as to V. J. Lenin." (N. 302.)

or the following quotation from one of the decisions of the Council:

"... we draw general attention to the fact that the Soviet Government is the only Government in the world which endeavours, by State means, to accomplish the ideals of God's Kingdom." (N. 303.)

At this time the Western World, in the persons of several eminent European public men, began to show a considerable interest in the case and person of Patriarch Tikhon, which could not but impress the Soviet Government. That interest expressed itself among others in the following documents:

1) A telegram of Cardinal Mercier to Patriarch Tikhon: .

> "Please accept the sentiments of esteem, admiration and ardent sympathy. Together with you we are praying to God for salvation of Russia." (N. 304.)

2) The reply of the French Minister in Finland to the sollicitations in favour of the Patriarch addressed by Bishop Seraphim, the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Finland, to the President of the French Republic:

> "The French Government which was greatly indignated by the sentence upon the Patriarch of Moscow, at once proposed to the British, Belgian, Italian and Yougo-Slav Cabinets to discuss jointly the measures which might be undertaken in order to effect the liberation of the Head of the Russian Church. The British Government, after having consulted its representative in Moscow, informed us that the interference of the Great Powers might be rather harmful than useful and that it would be used as a proof of the solidarity

of the bourgeois governments with the would-be enemies of the proletariat.

"The above opinion of the British Cabinet was regarded as plausible by my Government; under those circumstances it cannot think that the satisfaction of your request would meet with any success." (N. 305.)

3) The reply of the British Foreign Office to Bishop Seraphim:

"At the request of Marquess Curzon I have the honour to reply to the letter of Your Eminence to His Majesty the King, of September 12-th, concerning the persecution of the Russian Church.

"Allow me to assure you that His Majesty's Government is sincerely grieved by all the attacks upon religious tolerance and sympathises with the victims of the persecutions who have to suffer for their convictions.

"The situation is, however, not such as to permit of any interference in the internal affairs of other countries and it only remains to us to hope that there where the struggle for convictions is particulary vivid, the general course of events will lead to general pacification and to the restoration of normal conditions which are so indispensable to the prosperity of every state.

"I must however mention that various societies in this country, prompted by His Eminence the Archbishop of Canterbury, are taking a lively interest in the fate of the Russian Church and doing all they can for its defence." (N. 306.)

4) The letter of the American Chargé d'Affaires in Finland:

"The report of the arrest of Patriarch Tikhon and others has been received and read with great interest." (N. 307.)

5) The reply of the President of the German Republic:

"Your Eminence,

"I have read with great sympathy your report and your request to sollicit before the Soviet Government on behalf of the persecuted Russian clergy.

"The German Government as such is not in a position to interfere officially in the question of the treatment of the Orthodox clergy, for it is an internal Russian question. Nevertheless, I can point out to you that Germany had upou several occasions informed the Russian Government that it was hoped in large ecclesiastical circles that the former would treat the clergy as gently as possible. Judging by the information received here, those appeals

of the German Government have had their effect upon the Russian Government.

"I readily believe that the persecutions of the oppressed Russian clergy will soon end, and beg Your Eminence to accept the assurance of my deepest and sincerest esteem." (N. 308.)

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and the Presidents of the Unions and Conferences of the principal nonconformist bodies in England and Wales addressed the following telegram to Lenin:

"In the name of the Christian Communions which we represent we desire to protest most earnestly against the attack on the Russian Church in the person of its Patriarch Tikhon.

The public mind and the conscience of Christiandom, and indeed of the whole civilized world, cannot tolerate silently so great a wrong." (N. 309.)

The following protest against the ruthless warfare upon all forms of religious belief carried on by the Soviet Government was issued by the heads of the religious denominations in England and in Scotland.

The signatures included the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Cardinal Bourne, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, representatives of the nonconformist bodies, and the Chief Rabbi:

To all men and women of goodwill.

"The last few weeks have witnessed a portent which has filled all generoushearted men and women with horror. The ruthless warfare which the Soviet Government of Russia has long carried on against all forms of religious belief has come to a head. During the period of the Soviet rule hundreds of thousands of religious people, and Ministers of Religion of all ranks and creeds, have been subjected to a savage persecution, the express object of which has been to root religion out of the land. The central facts for which religion stands have been systematically outraged and insulted. The most sacred of religious festivals have been made the occasion for blasphemous travesty, and at this moment the attack upon religion itself finds fresh illustration in the trial for their lives of the chief leaders of religion in Russia.

"The Bolsheviks themselves have not disguised the purpose which they have in view. In their own journal only three weeks ago they confessed both their aim and their difficulty. To quote their words: 'We must carry on our agitation against religion just as systematically as we do in political questions, but with even more determination... Although we have declared war on the denizens of Heaven it is by no means easy to sweep them

from the households of the workmen.' (See *Times* March 29-th.)

"It is for the sake of those workmen and of the whole people of Russia, and for the preservation in their hearts of faith in God and the maintainance of religious liberty that we appeal. We represent many religious communions and many political opinions, but we are united in the indignation and horror with which we regard the present policy of systematic persecution of religion in all its forms. Such a policy cannot be tolerated in silence by those who value religion or liberty. Our protest will, we are confident, evoke a response everywhere on the part of those who have at heart the well-being of the world.

Randall Cantuar.

Cosmo Ebor.

John Smith, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Francis, Cardinal Bourne.

J. D. Jones (Congregationalist), Moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England.

J. H. Shakespeare (Baptist), ex-Moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England.

W. Lewis Robertson (Presbyterian),

W. H. Armstrong (Wesleyan), Secretaries of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England.

F. C. Spurr (Baptist), President of the National Free Church Council.

Thomas Nightingale (United Methodist), Secretary of the National Free Church Council.

J. Scott Lidgett (Wesleyan), Hon. Secretary of the National Free Church Council.

John Clifford, ex-President of the Baptist World Alliance.

A. E. Garvie, ex-Chairman of the Congregational Union.

R. F. Horton, Minister of Lyndhurst road, Hampstead, Congregational Church.

J. H. Jowett, formerly Minister, Westminster Chapel.

W. Bramwell Booth, General of the Salvation Army.

I. H. Hertz, Chief Rabbi. (N. 310.)

The same interest in, and attention to, the fate of the arrested Patriarch was manifested in many parliamentary interpellations which took place at this time and which cannot be reproduced here for the lack of space.

The situation that arose was rather awkward and disquieting for the Soviet Government. Its nervosity and irresoluteness, which at times verged upon badly concealed fear lest the existing semi-diplomatic relations (in particular with Great Britain) should be broken, manifested itself in the fact that the date of the trial of Patriarch Tikhon was several times postponed.

According to the information received by the "Times" from Riga the hearing of the case was finally fixed for the middle of November 1922. Then it was postponed again till April 18-th 1923. There was some inner struggle in the Council of People's Commissaries and in the Executive Committee and at last the opinion of the left wing which insisted on the speedy liquidation of the case got the upper hand. Even the names of the future judges were made known and it was generally expected that the trial would soon begin. This certainty was apparently shared by the agents of the Government one of whom, a journalist of rather doubtful fame, wrote triumphantly anticipating the trial and its result:

> "... the prayers of Patriarch Tikhon did not reach God the Almighty. They were intercepted by the S. P. D. (State Political Department)." (N. 311.)

Those lines were printed on p. 3 of the Moscow "Pravda" of April 24-th 1923. On p. 4 of the main official organ of the same date we read:

"The hearing of the case of Patriarch Tikhon . . . is postponed in view of the information that has come to hand about the direct connection between the crimes of citizen Gonetzky (bishop Theodosius of Kolomna) and citizens Bielavin (former Patriarch Tikhon) and Phenomenov (archbishop Nicander). The day of the trial will be made known by means of a special notice." (N. 312.)

The world waited two more months for the announcement that day, when suddenly on June 26-th 1923 the laconic statement about the liberation of the Patriarch was published.

Prior to his liberation the Patriarch had to sign a declaration drawn up by the State Political Department in which he admitted his guilt and promised to sever once for all his connection with the so-called counter-revolutionary circles (See the Supplement).

It would be useless to try to guess what were the concrete circumstances and considerations that forced the Patriarch to make this step.

On the part of the Soviet Government this sudden change of policy was obviously forced. It was dictated by the instinct of self-preservation as well as by political security. There is nothing to surprise us in it. Whenever the Soviet Government came across some force that threatened its existence it immediately gave way. It was so at the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk peace, it was so, too, at the time of the Riga

peace. The liberation of the Patriarch was but a moment in the general policy of capitulation before the European Governments and the European public opinion the most striking manifestation of which was the backing out of the Soviet Government after the well-known ultimatum of the British Cabinet. Judging by the trustworthy information which we possess, thus precisely was this step interpreted in Russia both by the popular masses and by the educated class. In Russia people honestly believe that the English and the American have demanded the release of the Patriarch and that the communists at once put up with that demand. In this explanation the essence of the thing is rightly grasped, but it is not exhaustive. The point is that there are two moments that play part in the Soviets' policy of capitulation. On the one hand there is the sheer fear and admission of one's own weakness, which makes the Soviet Government bow before the others' might. On the other hand, — and this moment is no less important — there is always present in the minds of communists a vague hope for some sort of social entanglement in Europe. Thus the Franco-German conflict has considerably raised the spirits of the Soviet Government inspiring it with a hope that the social and international struggle in the world would be carried to such a pitch that communism and the communist Government would see their way to profit by it. *Reculer pour mieux sauter* — such is the motto of the Soviet Government in its policy towards Europe. The concessions

made by it in the matters religious and ecclesiastical are not the outcome of any change of principle. It is again the same "tactical" device prompted by fear and cunning.

CHAPTER X.

The case of Mgrs. Cepliak and Budkievicz.

Almost on the eve of the appointed trial of Patriarch Tikhon, the Soviet Government, not being sure as to the reception it might meet with in the entire civilised world, suddenly decided to organise first — as a feeler, so to speak — the trial of Mgr. Cepliak, Head of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, and several other Roman Catholic priests.

The circumstances that served as a pretext to this trial were rather simple:

> "In April 1920 the agents of the Extraordinary Commission have searched the flat of citizen Budkievicz and found the minutes of the sittings of the Roman Catholic Clergy which took place in Petrograd in the period of time between December 18-th 1918 and April 7-th 1920.
>
> "At those sittings were present Archbishop Ropp of Mogilev, bishop Jan Cepliak, Mgrs.

Manetzky and Budkievicz, Fathers Vassilevsky, Modovilkis, Junevitch, Majuiakis and others." (N. 313.)

After the lapse of two years the Soviet Government discovered in those minutes a would-be professed intention to oppose the carrying out of the decree concerning the Disestablishment of the Church. Seeing that some of the persons mentioned above were also guilty of non-compliance with the decree concerning the confiscation of treasures, the Soviet Government joined the two charges together and arrested in the spring of 1923 Bishop Cepliak, Mgr. Budkievicz and others (Archbishop Ropp was abroad).

The arrest took place in the beginning of March. It was reported in the following telegram of the Havas Agency:

"Warsaw, March 13-th. — The Head of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, Bishop Cepliak, and 13 other priests who arrived here (at Moscow) from Petrograd to be present at the hearing of their case fixed for March 14-th have been arrested here. Cepliak was arrested in the house belonging to the Roman Catholic Church in Moscow after a search made there by the agents of the State Political Department." (N. 314.)

A few days earlier (on March 11-th) "Pravda" published the following information:

"On March 14-th there will be heard in the Supreme Court of Justice the case of the Roman Catholic Churchmen who are accused of opposition to the decrees of the Soviet Government concerning the confiscation of the Church treasures and the Disestablishment of the Church." (N. 315.)

A little later the following Havas telegram was published by the foreign press:

"Warsaw, March 22-nd. — It is reported from Moscow: A few days before the trial began a special meeting was organised with the aim of influencing the Court and making it carry a severe sentence upon the accused. Communist Marchlevsky proposed a resolution accusing the Roman Catholic priests with Bishop Cepliak at their head of counter-revolutionary designs. The resolution was carried. The same Marchlevsky published an article in "Izvestia" accusing the Vatican of having had a leading hand in the *sabotage* organised the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, and of interfering with the Russian internal affairs." (N. 316.)

During the trial the following telegrams were published by the "Times":

"Riga, March 23-rd. — The Church dignitaries now appearing before the Supreme Re-

volutionary Tribunal include Archbishop Cepliak, Bishops Malevsky and Budkievicz, eleven Catholic priests, and the Unitarian priest Feodoroff.

„The indictment states that in 1918 the Catholic clergy formed an organisation in Petrograd to thwart the Soviet's decrees separating Church and State. In 1920, on Mgr. Cepliak's initiative, it was decided to offer active resistance. In particular the clergy refused to sign the agreement to give up churches and church property. In 1922 they refused to surrender sequestrated valuables.

"When questioned, the priests stated they owed obedience only to spiritual authority." (N. 317.)

"Riga, March 22-nd. — The trial of the Roman Catholic Church dignitaries of Petrograd, including Archbishop Cepliak, began at Moscow yesterday.

"Galkin is acting as president of the tribunal, and Krylenko, who prosecuted the Social Revolutionaries last summer, is prosecuting counsel. Defending counsel is Bobristcheff-Pushkin.

"Mgr. Cepliak, Catholic Metropolitan of Petrograd, and a number of priests are accused of forming an anti-revolutionary organisation in 1918, of actively opposing the Soviet policy

with respect to religion, and of concealing treasures from the requisition authorities." (N. 318.)

"Riga, March 26-th. — The trial of the Catholic clergy in Moscow is drawing to an end, and the sentences are expected to-day or to-morrow.

"Krylenko demands death for Archbishop Cepliak, Bishop Budkievicz, and the priests Kveshko and Eismont, and imprisonment for the remainder. Krylenko bases his demand on the Soviet criminal code, Articles 69 and 199, but the defending counsel plead the impossibility of sentence under this code, which, having been introduced only last autumn, was not in existence when the alleged offences were committed. Nevertheless the pronouncement, perhaps the actual execution of the death sentence, is generally considered possible under the Soviet's elastic system of justice." (N. 319.)

Of the trial itself there was also the following report in the "Chicago Tribune", from its Moscow correspondent:

"Bishop Cepliak and other accused behave with great dignity and do not hide their contempt of the Soviet Government. Their outspoken replies to the questions of the Chairman of the Tribunal disconcert even the counsels for defence.

"Questioned whether they recognized the Soviet Government the accused replied: 'We recognize Rome, not Moscow.'

„During the trial dramatic details have come to light about the resistance offered by the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Jewish clergy to the spoliation of churches. In one case as was testified by witnesses, the Roman Catholic priest declared to the Soviet agents who wanted to remove sacred objects from a church: "You will have to pass over my corpse." (N. 320.)

The veracity of this information is corroborated by the communist press itself. Thus in the report of the trial published by "Pravda" we read the following deposition of a witness, by the name Smirnov, who stood at the head of the Administrative Department of a local section in Petrograd and was in charge of confiscation. That is how he describes the confiscation in one of the Roman Catholic churches:

"When the commission entered, Gritzko and another priest kneeled and began to sing psalms. They were joined by the parishoners. After they were repeatedly asked to desist and leave the church, it proved necessary to apply force and lead out those who opposed the sealing of the church. The crowd was in extreme exaltation and one could hear voices

like following: 'The Soviet Government is not everlasting, but the Church will abide' . . ." (N. 321.)

Of course such depositions were interpreted against the accused and served as the strongest proofs of their guilt. The sentence against the accused — undoubtedly a preconceived one — was passed at dawn on March 26-th 1923. The concluding part of the verdict runs thus:

". . . all the accused priests declared in the course of the trial that they held the enactments of the Pope to be absolutely binding for them, in questions of creed as well as with regard to the confiscation of the Church property, notwithstanding the fact that those enactments were in direct contradiction with the decrees of the Soviet Government. Likewise, the same priests declared in the Court that contrary to the clause 121 of the Criminal Code they did, and they were going to, teach the children so-called religion, and that they did not recognise the aforesaid clause of the Criminal Code.

"In view of the above the Court declares guilty:

1) Jan Cepliak and Constantine Budkievicz — of intentionally conducing the above-mentioned counter-revolutionary activities of the organisation of the Roman Catholic clergy

in Petrograd, which activities were aimed at the opposition to the Soviet Government, the weakening of the proletarian dictatorship, the restoration of the old proprietory rights of the Church, and the instigation of the large mass of the parishoners against the Soviet Government, which, granted the religious prejudices of that mass, led to anti-Government demonstrations; also — of refusing to comply with the Soviet laws and acting contrary to clauses 62, 119 and 121 of the Criminal Code...

"... Therefore Cepliak and Budkievicz are sentenced by the Court to the highest penalty, viz. to be shot." (N. 322.)

Other accused were declared guilty of similar crimes and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment. They were all to be exempted from amnesty.

Simultaneously, the following decision of the Central Executive Committee was published in the official organ of the Government:

"The carrying out of the verdict against Cepliak, Budkievicz and others is to be postponed until further notice." (N. 323.)

It may be confidently asserted that the above decision was dictated entirely by the fear of the impression which the immediate carrying out of the verdict would have produced upon European public

opinion. Besides, there was the additional fear of possible complications with Poland. That the European public opinion did not remain in this case indifferent may be judged from the following reports:

> "London, March 29-th. — The following details are reported of the debate in the House of Commons on the subject of death verdict passed upon bishop Cepliak and Mgr. Budkievicz: Ammon (Labour Party) demanded the interference of the Governments of Great Britain and other countries. Under-Secretary of State, Mac-Neill informed the House that the British representative in Moscow, Mr. Hodgson did all that was in his power. The proposal made by the Unionist members to the effect that the Soviet commercial agents should be expelled from England in case the verdict is carried out, was met with applause. The press is unanimous in its condemnation of the verdict. G. Lansbury has sent a telegram to Tchitcherin, on behalf of the Labour Party and the socialists, demanding the reprieve of the condemned. The same demand was forwarded by O'Connor in the name of two millions of Irish people. Commander Kenworthy also sent a telegram of protest to Moscow." (N. 324.)

The following report of this debate was given by the "Times":

Mr. Mc Neill, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Canterbury, U.), in reply to Mr. Ammon (Camberwell N., Lab.), said:

A telegram has just been received from the British Agent in Moscow confirming the report that the Archbishop of Petrograd and one of his priests have been sentenced to death, and stating that it is feared the sentence will be carried out within fourty-eight hours. (Mr. Newbold, Motherwell, Comm.-"Rats!") Mr. Hodgson has done all in his power, under instructions from the Government, to save these ecclesiastics, and I cannot see what more can be done if the Soviet Government is determined to carry out barbarities of this nature.

Mr. Ammon: Does not the hon. gentleman think it possible that something might be done if we cabled immediately, both to our representative and to the representatives of foreign Powers, telling them the opinion of this country?

Mr. Mc Neill: I have made that inquiry myself, and I am convinced that every possible instruction and persuasion has come, not merely from our representative, but from the heads of all the religious organizations.

Some exchanges took place between J. Jones (Silvertown, Lab.) and Mr. Newbold (Motherwell, Comm.). The latter had greeted Mr. Ammon's supplementary question with a

jeering remark. "What's the matter with you?" shouted Mr. Jones. "Do you want these men shot? You ought to be chucked out. I am a Socialist, but." Mr. Newbold's rejoiner was not audible. "If they kill them I'll kill you" added Mr. Jones, amid laughter.

Mr. Jones (addressing the Chair): Cannot we hold the hon. member for Motherwell (Mr. Newbold) as a hostage? (Loud laughter and cheers.) Mr. Newbold: It is not a fact that no clerics condemned to death have ever been put to death? (Cries of "No."). Sir W. Davison (Kensington, S., U.): Can the hon. gentleman tell whether we are any longer going to tolerate in our midst trade delegations from this barbarous Power? (Cheers.) Mr. Peto (Barnstaple, U.): May I ask whether, in order to emphasize the opinion of this country, the hon. gentleman will make representations to the so-called Soviet trade representatives in this country that they will have to leave within twenty-four hours of these executions taking place? (Cheers.)

No further reply was made. Some amusement was caused by Mr. Jones and Mr. Newbold leaving the House together. (N. 325.)

"Berne, March 29-th. — The entire press of Switzerland — Roman Catholic as well as

Protestant — protests with indignation against the new crime of the Soviets. The majority of the newspapers utter their hope that the Soviet Government will at the last moment stop before committing a crime which would prove that it still adheres to its barbarous policy thereby excluding Soviet Russia from the number of civilized powers." (N. 326.)

"London, March 29-th. — Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Bourne, has declared his readiness to support all attempts to influence the Soviet Government in the sense of revoking the verdict. In the opinion of the Archbishop, a death sentence against people who have committed no crime, but merely did their pastoral duty by safeguarding the sacred relics, cannot be even regarded as a legal verdict. It is an act of violence which arouses profound indignation throughout the civilized world." (N. 327.)

"Rome, March 28-th. — 'Corriere d'Italia' learns that the Pope had applied to Moscow, at the very beginning of the trial of Mgr. Cepliak, through the American Mission, and obtained the assurance that even if the death sentence were passed it would be revoked." (N. 328.)

The "Times" reported in this connection:

"Rome, March 29th. — The action taken by the Pope in regard to the proceedings of the Soviet Government against Archbishop Cepliak is considered to have been largely responsible for the postponement of the execution.

"His Holiness instructed Professor Walsh, Head of the Pontifical Mission for the relief of distress in Russia, to do all in his power to intervene on behalf of the arrested priests. Professor Walsh, who is also a member of the American Mission, succeeded in having the trial several times deferred and, further postponement being impossible, received the assurance that even should the capital sentence be passed its execution would not take place.

This is the second time that the Pope has intervened with the Soviets on behalf of condemned ecclesiastics. As Papal Nuncio to Poland in 1919 he was successful in securing the release of the Metropolitan of Petrograd, who had been imprisoned and threatened with execution. The Holy See recognized Mgr. Cepliak and his companions as members of the Catholic Hierarchy, and as such entitled to the protection and help of the Supreme Pontificate." (N. 329.)

There are scores of similar telegrams, but we will reproduce here but two more:

1) From Cardinal Mercier to the Archbishop of Canterbury:

"Have received a wire concerning the arrest of the Roman Catholic Archbishop Cepliak and 13 Roman Catholic priests in Moscow. They are all threatened with death penalty. Am addressing myself to Lord Curzon. Could you assist me? (N. 330.)

2) Reply of the Archbishop of Canterbury:

"Thanks for your wire. I have already spoken with the Head of the Foreign Office who is telegraphing to Moscow. For my part I will use the first opportunity for interpellation in the House of Lords." (N. 331.)

Further, the Polish Telegraph Agency reported:

"It is reported from Moscow: The German Ambassador, Count Brockdorf-Rantzau called upon Tchitcherin in connection with the case of Bishop Cepliak. Tchitcherin assured the German Ambassador that the verdict would not be carried out and that the whole case would be the subject of discussion between the Soviet Government and the Polish Cabinet." (N. 332.)

The French deputy, Herriot, has sent the following telegram to Moscow: "On behalf of the French democracy I earnestly beg you not to execute the condemned Polish priests."

Herriot tried to collect other signatures to that telegram, but many deputies refused to give theirs out of the fear lest their consent be interpreted as a recognition of the Soviet Government. (N. 333.)

"Kurier Polski" wrote:

"On March 28-th the eldest representatives of the Diplomatic Corps in Warsaw, the Papal Nuncio and the Minister of the United States, made earnest remonstrances in the Soviet mission in connection with the barbarous verdict. M. Obolensky promised to convey them to his Government. M. Obolensky was also visited by the German Minister, Herr Rauscher." (N. 334.)

The general indignation found also its expression in the declarations of the Governments. The Polish Premier M. Sikorsky, thus spoke in the Diet on March 27-th:

"This trial has moved the whole civilised world. Religious tolerance and the position of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia are in danger. The Polish Government drew the attention of the Apostolic Curia and of all the European Powers to that fact. The whole civilised world replied by unanimous protests. Seeing that at the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia stood a Pole and that the interests of the Polish national minority

amounting to two million people were affected, it was but natural that our Government and our people should take a great interest in the proceedings. The Soviet Government knew our attitude and throughout this year it was trying to disperse our suspicions. When the action was brought against the Archbishop, it was represented as a purely formal proceeding of no great moment. However, our suspicions have been justified.

"I took the liberty to declare to M. Obolensky, the representative of Soviet Russia, that in our opinion the sentence was totally unjust. I believe that in the mind of every one who looks impartially at the thing, serious doubts must arise as to whether there are no other motives in this case, besides the religious... The Government itself, and not the revolutionary tribunal which is but a docile instrument of the former, ought to bear the entire responsibility for that barbarous verdict.

"M. Obolensky has informed me that the verdict will not be carried out for some time to come and that it will be made subject of further negotiations. Official information from Moscow confirms that. Nevertheless I do not wish in the least to underrate the gravity of the situation. On the contrary, I wish to emphasize it, for we have had too

many instances when the pledges of the Soviet Government were revoked for some tactical reasons.

"In any case I declare publicly that this question, to which the attention of all European Powers, and above all of the Apostolic Curia, has been drawn, cannot be made an object of political bargaining." (N. 335.)

The Polish press joined the Prime-Minister in his indignation:

"Rzecz Pospolita" wrote:

"One simply cannot believe that the madness of the communists would go so far as to make them dig a ditch between themselves and the rest of the world by sentencing Archbishop Cepliak and Mgr. Budkievicz, — a ditch that it will not be easy to bridge." (N. 336.)

"Gazette Poranna" said:

"It is all right to talk about diplomacy, but we for our part doubt whether the Polish public opinion will tolerate the presence of the Soviet Mission in Warsaw, if the verdict against Archbishop Cepliak is carried out." (N. 337.)

"Kurjer Warszawsky" said:

"... It is something more than a struggle against the Roman Catholic Church. It is an assault on religion in general, a campaign

against the teaching of Christ, against the moral foundations on which our society is built." (N. 338.)

In connection with the postponement of the carrying out of the verdict "Gazetta Poranna" wrote:

> "The story of the trial of the social-revolutionaries has been repeated. As in their case, the carrying out of the verdict has been postponed 'until further orders'. They are still locked in the Bolshevik cellars where they are dying a slow death... It is worse than death itself.
>
> "The 'postponement' of death sentence has become a regular weapon in the hands of the Red tyrants with which they terrorize and blackmail the civilised world. In the meantime the wretched condemned will slowly die." (N. 339.)

Similar attitude was taken by the press of the whole civilised world.

The case was also discussed by the British House of Lords where the Archbishop of Canterbury questioned the Government on the subject.

The report of the debate upon this question ran as follows:

> "The Archbishop of Canterbury asked the Government whether they had any information

with regard to the reported arrest by the Bolshevists of Monsignor Cepliak, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Petrograd and certain Roman Catholic priests, and the threat of immediate death; and also whether the Government had any recent information with regard to the present position of his Holiness Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow. He (the Archbishop) had communications on this subject from Cardinal Mercier, the Polish Legation in this country, and during the past forty eight hours from the Vatican, stating that it was their desire to cooperate in any inquiry this country might set on foot into these matters. The Pope had already taken such steps as seemed to him proper and right for making inquiry, and, if necessary, for making a public protest. He wished to know whether the Government was in a position to give a fuller information and details as to the present position. Only that day, from a source he had always found to be trustworthy, he had heard that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Petrograd had been taken to Moscow, that his trial was immediately pending, and that, apparently, a grave outcome was to be feared. They could not isolate incidents against individual ecclesiastics from the wider movements taking place throughout Russia practically against religion as a whole.

"Evidence in his hands was accumulating as to a definite anti-religious movement in Russia, by the circulation of literature and by persecution. Referring to the Patriarch Tikhon, the Archbishop said that he knew, from knowledge of a direct kind, that the Patriarch had shown dislike to anything which would appear disloyal even to the existing Russian Government, which was persecuting him. He wished to know, if the trial was about to take place, whether an independent authority would be allowed to be represented there. Statements were appearing in the official Soviet Press about Independent Church of Russia, which was supposed to be the body now existing for religious life in Moscow and perhaps also in Petrograd, but which was really a fictitious body created for the purpose of cloaking the real designs of those who would be afraid of popular indignation. Testimony came to him from all sources at home and abroad to show how anxious people were becoming. This was far from being a Church of England matter. Nonconformist feeling was also strong. The condition of things seemed to be such as was likely to arouse the feeling of the whole civilized world.

"Lord Sydenham said the cases quoted by the Most Rev. Primate were only part of a very great whole. In the first four years of

Bolshevist rule 1,233 Archbishops, Bishops and priests of the Orthodox Church were foully murdered. The attack on the Roman Catholic Church was of comparatively recent date, but before that the Orthodox Church was robbed of property to the value of 30 000 000 gold roubles. From first to last the Bolshevists had murdered very nearly two million people, all Russians, mostly peasants and workmen. The full loss of life from the application of the doctrines of Karl Marx to Russia was now twenty million, including those who had died from starvation and disease. This was the most horrible crime in history. In comparison with Lenin and Trotsky, Attila was a humanitarian. This was part of a great attack on Christianity throughout the world. It was being carried out by other methods, both here and in America, and not without some success. He felt sure the Most Rev. Primate would give his powerful support to those who were trying to prevent the conversion of young children in Socialist Sunday Schools to revolutionary atheism.

"Marquess Curzon, Foreign Secretary, whose reply was mostly inaudible in the Reporters' Gallery, was understood to say that the persecution of the Roman Catholics in Russia dated back to December 2nd 1922, when a Roman Catholic church in Petrograd was

closed by the Bolshevists. A few days later ten other Roman Catholic churches were closed in Petrograd. The reason given by the Bolshevists was the refusal of the Roman Catholic clergy to recognize a decree for the lease and use of church property. The effect of this decree was to recognize the ownership by the State of Church property, in contravention to the laws of the Roman Catholic Church. An appeal was made to the Pope by Mgr. Cepliak, through the Papal Nuncio at Warsaw, on December 6th. Nothing further was heard of any persecution until a telegram was received on January 27-th, 1923, from His Majesty's representative at the Vatican, stating that Mgr. Cepliak and other priests had been arrested for opposing the confiscation of the sacred vessels by the Soviet. On receipt of this news a telegram was sent to the British Agent at Moscow, instructing him to make strong representations on behalf of Mgr. Cepliak and the other priests, unless he considered this would do more harm than good. Mr. Hodgson, the British Agent, made representations to M. Litvinoff, pointing out the lamentable impression on public opinion abroad if the trial was persisted in. On March 19th Mr. Hodgson was again instructed to save the lifes of those arrested. The Government's own information from Mr. Hodgson showed that the eccle-

siastics in question were not arrested until March 10th, although previously threatened with arrest. On March 5th Mgr. Cepliak and fifteen other priests had been summoned before the revolutionary tribunal in Moscow. Apparently they were arrested on arrival in Moscow, and were then transported through the streets in a military truck under an armed guard. The trial was due to begin on March 14th. There was ground for thinking that the real object was to provide material for an anti-Christian demonstration before Easter, and prepare for the trial of the Patriarch Tikhon. The Government had heard that morning that the trial had now been postponed, probably to March 21-st. As regards the Patriarch, he knew very little about his present position. The date of his trial had not been fixed. If it was possible to have British representatives at either of the trials, they would endeavour to secure that object. He was profoundly horrified and dismayed at the wanton persecution that was taking place. He wished British influence, or the influence of decency, were greater; but anything that Government could do, by representations or otherwise, the House could rely on them to do.

"The Archbishop of Canterbury, in thanking the noble Marquess for his reply, said that his Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow had been

under arrest for two years in a monastery. He was not allowed to speak to anyone, or to be aware of anything that was happening outside." (N. 340.)

Finally, several Governments formally remonstrated with the communist Government of Soviet Russia. Thus the Polish Government addressed the following declaration to the representative of the Soviet Government in Warsaw, M. Obolensky:

"... The Government and the public opinion of Poland have always watched with attention and anxiety the attitude of the Soviet Government towards the Roman Catholic Church and the representatives of the Polish clergy in Russia. Our interest in this question remains and will always remain the same. Throughout the trial of Archbishop Cepliak and other Roman Catholic priests the representatives of the Soviet Government kept on assuring the Polish Mission in Moscow that the whole trial was a mere formal affair and would not lead to any serious consequences. By leaving Archbishop Cepliak and others at large during the whole year and then suddenly arresting them 10 days ago and pronouncing a death sentence which is to be carried out in three days, — the Soviet Government has proved that the trial had been engineered by it with some definite object in view.

"I warn the Soviet Government not only in my capacity of the head of the Polish Government, but on behalf of the whole civilised world which is unanimous in condemning this unprecedented act of violence, that the responsibility for carrying out the sentence whose injustice is so utterly obvious rests entirely with the aforesaid Government." (N. 341.)

Having received this declaration and quietly waited till the storm of indignation was at last allayed, the Soviet Government, in perfect certainty that the above described excitement implied no real menace to it, addressed the following document to the European public opinion:

"The All Russian Executive Committee having examined the petitions of citizens Cepliak and Budkievicz upon whom the sentence of capital punishment was passed by the Supreme Court, decreed as follows:

"The activities of citizen Cepliak, as established by the Court, were obviously and avowedly meant for the detriment of the working class; they were directed against the fundamental conquests of the proletarian revolution, and tried to abuse the freedom of religious worship which was guaranteed by the law to all denominations alike; they represent therefore a very grave crime for which the

revolutionary republic, still surrounded by its enemies, has no other punishment but that applied by the Court with regard to citizen Cepliak.

"Taking, however, into account the fact that citizen Cepliak belongs to that religious denomination which in the times of Tsarism and under the bourgeois republic was persecuted by the Government and that the carrying out of the punishment which he really deserves might be interpreted by the most backward elements of the Roman Catholic population of Soviet Russia, whose religious prejudices were made use of by Cepliak and his accomplices, as directed primarily against their creed (the Central Executive Committee resolves) to substitute the sentence passed by the Court by 10 years imprisonment in strict isolation.

"As regards the other condemned, viz. citizen Budkievicz who coupled his religious activities with direct counter-revolutionary work under the auspices of a hostile bourgeois Government and used his position of a priest for crimes which are tantamount to high treason — his petition for reprieve is to be rejected.

Signed: Chairman M. Kalinin
Secretary T. Sapronov.

Moscow, Kreml, March 29-th, 1923." (N. 342.)

Immediatly upon the publication of that document the British Government directed its representative in Moscow to hand a note to the Soviet Government demanding that the carrying out of the sentence should be deferred.

The real reply to that note[1]) was the following official communiqué published in "Izvestia":

> "The sentence of the Supreme Court with regard to citizen Budkievicz whose petition for reprieve was rejected by the All-Russian Executive Committee has been carried out." (N. 343.)

Formal replies were received by the Polish Prime Minister and by His Majesty's Government somewhat later. As to the first there appeared in the Communist press the following official communiqué:

> "From the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.
>
> In connection with the declarations of the Polish Prime Minister in the Diet and his interview with the Russian Plenipotentiary in Poland, comrade Obolensky, concerning the trial of the Catholic clergy in Moscow, the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs has directed comrade Obolensky to transmit the following verbal note to the Polish Government:

[1]) Beside the Polish and the British Cabinets, similar demands were addressed to the Soviet Government by the Governments of Czechoslovakia and Italy, as well as by the Vatican.

"At the request of the Russian Government its Plenipotentiary begs to inform the Polish Government of the following: The Russian Government sees a direct contradiction between the repeated peaceful assurances of the Polish Government and the declarations of the Polish Prime Minister *re* the case of Cepliak. Seeing that every State has the undisputable right to punish the criminals according to its own laws, any attempt to interfere with that right and to prevent the carrying out of the lawful sentence against several Russian nationals who were found guilty of crimes against their people and the State, the attempt accompanied by threats and unheard-of insults against the Russian Government, must be regarded as an unfriendly proceeding and an outcome of agressive policy towards Russia. The Russian Government deems it superfluous to discuss the impossible charges which formed the gist of the speech of the Polish Prime Minister; it rejects indignantly his unprecedented claims. The Russian Government rejects in particular the claim of the Polish Government to play the part of the protector of Russian citizens of Polish origin and reminds the Polish Government that there are on the Polish territory about 10 million Ukrainians and White Russians with regard to whom the Polish Go-

vernment defies the elementary principles which safeguard the existence of national minorities. The Russian Government denies categorically that any representative of it could have told the Polish Minister in Moscow, or anybody else, that the trial in question was of purely formal significance and would have no serious consequences; it refuses to discuss the inopportune and ungrounded accusations which are being brought forth against Russian Courts and Russian authorities. Finally the Russian Government declares that the responsibility for the consequences of such an unprecedented action rests entirely with the Polish Government.
March 30-th 1923." (N. 344.)

The reply to the British Government, handed on March 31-st, was of a similar character; it led to a conflict between the British representative and the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.

The whole incident was wound up by the excuses presented by the Soviet Government to His Majesty's Government in compliance with the request contained in the well-known ultimatum of Lord Curzon.

The Polish nation replied to the insulting insinuations of the Soviet Government by the following resolution which was carried by the Diet unanimously and amid profound silence:

"The horrible crime which has been committed by the enemies of Christianity in Moscow has struck the whole civilised world. No diplomatic considerations, no reasons of political opportunism can stifle the general voice of indignation and protest against this inhuman crime, by which the elementary principles of conscience, freedom and justice have been scorned. In view of that the Polish Diet on behalf of many millions of Christian population expresses its indignation at the crime committed in Moscow and moves the following resolution (here all the deputies rose up):

The Polish Diet united with the whole civilised world in the feeling of deep and painful indignation at the unheard-of legal murder committed in Moscow by the fiends of Christianity against Mgr. Budkievicz, a true and unselfish friend of the poor people, who fell victim of his faithfulness to his Church and his pastoral duties,

1) admires the courage with which Mgr. Budkievicz accepted the martyrdom for faith, and is convinced that the blood that has been innocently spilt will as of fore bring forth the seeds of love and selfdenial, strengthening everywhere and especially among the Polish nation to which the deceased belonged that courage and that vigour which are necessary

for the victory of moral principles both in individual and in social life;

2) solemnly protests on behalf of the Polish nation in the face of the whole world against the violent and outrageous persecutions of Christian faith and morals in Soviet Russia;

3) expresses its sympathy with the wretched Christians of Soviet Russia who are so terribly suffering under the yoke of the enemies of Christianity and for whom still greater sufferings and persecutions are in store;

4) addresses a request to the Government not to renounce its intention to bring about a common action of the whole civilised world in defence of the suppressed religious freedom and in favour of the members of the Church who have been arrested by the Soviet Government, with Archbishop Cepliak and Patriarch Tikhon at their head;

5) expresses its conviction that through his martyrdom for faith Mgr. Budkievicz, the successor of holy martyrs, has acquired the right to be honoured as a new protector of our country." (N. 345.)

The press of the whole world was equally impressed by the barbarous crime committed by the Soviet Government. Thus, "Ossevatore Romano" wrote:

"The execution of the Roman Catholic priest as a punishment for the breach of law committed two years ago, excites everywhere great grief and profound indignation. No man who has been brought up in the spirit of Christian civilisation can vindicate such an act." (N. 346.)

"Rzecz Pospolita" wrote:

"The trial of Tikhon and the trial of Cepliak are two severe blows at Christianity. Pastors are struck that their flocks should disperse.

"The Russian Church left to itself is leading a hard and tortured existence since the very first days of the Bolshevik revolution. In January 1918 the bolsheviks killed Metropolitan Vladimir and by March 1922 28 Orthodox bishops and 1215 clergymen of the lower rank died a death of martyrs. Since then the figures have considerably increased.

"During the Moscow trial one of the accused said that no doubt every authority came from God, but that God has evidently sent Bolshevik Government to punish Russia. If it is so, the whole civilised Christian world must pray to God that this awful punishment soon be over and that Russia, where the blood of martyrs had been spilt, be morally restored and readmitted into the family of civilised nations." (N. 347.)

"Gazetta Poranna" wrote:

> "The murder took place on the eve of the great festival of the whole Christian world. By this symbolic repetition of the closing of the Holy Sepulchre with a heavy cross the red tyrants want to kill faith in Resurrection. This murder is a challenge to the whole civilised world." (N. 348.)

"The Socialistic Worker" (Warsaw) wrote:

> "Do the Soviets really not realize what an indignation will the execution of Mgr. Budkievicz provoke throughout Poland and how dangerous it is to excite the religious sentiments of the millions of Roman-Catholic population." (N. 349.)

In the opinion of "The Express Poranny":

> "The only possible answer to this new crime of the bolsheviks would be the passing of a law by the Diet proclaiming all the communists in Poland as outlaws. For wild beasts there is no place in the civilised world — they must be ruthlessly exterminated." (N. 350.)

"Kurjer Warszawsky" dwelling upon the events of Moscow reminds its readers of the words pronounced by communist Krylenko, the Prosecuting Counsel in the trial of bishop Cepliak, viz.: "You have lost your game and you must pay now."

"'Game', 'card', 'lose', 'win' — those are the favourite terms of the revolutionary statesmen of Moscow. Indeed, if Dr. Mabuse[1]) would come with his band of card-sharpers, he would use that language. This detail characterises very well the typical atmosphere of the Soviet Republic... Kreml has become the home of card-sharpers. For the red gamblers, who risk everything, everything is a game and a false game, too. With a gesture of a drunken gambler in a den they stake the greatest spiritual wealth: the Christian ethics. The Kreml has thrown a challenge to God. Communism has set out to kill the noble instincts of man by depriving him of morals and religion. By that means Communism is endeavouring to create a new generation deprived of conscience, completely materialised, shameless, cynical, governed by nothing but beastly fear before the whips of the red tyrants.

"Merejkovsky foresaw this and his words still cling in my years: 'The world war will end in a new war, in the war between the Cross and the Pentagram. A new sign is appearing in the sky: the blood-red star. Fire and blood are everywhere... Freedom has turned into violence, equality — into slavery,

[1]) The Polish paper refers here to a sensational picture play.

fraternity — into general slaughter. Revolution has become reaction, such as has not yet been witnessed in the world. The name of that reaction is Bolshevism. But the Cross will vanquish!'

"Yes, the Cross will vanquish the red pentagram. This means that reason will vanquish insanity, that civilisation will vanquish barbarity." . . . (N. 351.)

At the same time the European Press published the following details of Mgr. Budkievicz' death. He was shot from behind in the cellar of the Moscow Extraordinary Commission on March 31-st, i. e. on the eve of the Roman Catholic Easter. Here are two reports:

1) "News has just reached here that the execution of Mgr. Budkievicz was carried out at four o'clock last Saturday morning. In accordanee with the Soviet practice, the condemned priest was taken to a cellar beneath the building of the Che-ka. Here he was made to stand with the executioner behind him. He was then shot with a revolver through the back of the head. His body was afterwards removed to some unknown spot.

"The first news of the execution was not received here until yesterday morning, telegraphic communication with the West having been suspended on Friday evening by order of the Soviet authorities.

"The Bolshevist newspapers, in publishing the official communiqué regarding the execution, made sarcastic comments on the intervention of foreign countries to save the life of the Prelate. The Pravda covered the Holy See with insults, and exhorted Italian Communists' to condemn the Pope to death by default pending his appearance before an international revolutionary tribunal." (N. 352.)

2) "The body of Mgr. Budkievicz together with the bodies of 10 bandits who were shot the same day was taken to the anatomic theatre of the Iauzsky Hospital. Only one revolver bullet was found in the brain. He was shot from almost no distance."... (N. 353.)

As to the Communist press, that is how it responded to the voices of horror and indignation that came from all quarters:

"When the trial of Cepliak began, a great excitement and noise was to be noticed amongst the German Centre, the Polish antisemites and the English conservatives. It is just possible that the order to make noise came from the very centre of the Catholic reaction, from the Vatican. But at any rate not only the Roman Catholics but the higher clergy of all other denominations felt affected by the trial of Cepliak and deemed the

moment opportune for a new attack against the Soviet Republic. In the British House of Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church which in its time knew no mercy towards Roman-Catholics and persecuted them with the same energy with which the Catholic inquisition persecuted and burnt down the Protestants, — now this very same Archbishop of Canterbury, who by his very position is a typical representative of the English cant, came forward with a question concerning the Cepliak trial. He was supported by the noble lord Sydenham, who violently attacked the Soviet Government. Lord Curzon stuttered some answer on behalf of the Cabinet, to the effect that the British Government will do everything it can in order to etc. Even in the House of Commons, which has not yet finished discussing the proposal of Snowden as to the peaceful transition from bourgeois to socialist regime, the noble representatives of the "Labour" party — of the same lot that dined recently with the King — also thought necessary to put a question about the "barbarous persecutions of religion" in Soviet Russia." (N. 354.)

The declaration of the Polish Prime Minister was thus characterised by the Communist Press:

"In the chorus of diatribes against the Soviet Republic is to be distinguished the falsetto

of Pan Sikorsky, the Prime Minister of Poland. It is quite obvious that the Poles want to make some political profit out of the Cepliak case... The irascible Polish Jupiter himself has unvoluntarily shown a small bit of his ear: the admissions of Pan Sikorsky only confirm our suspicion that the condemned bishops and priests are in fact the agents of the hostile States." (N. 355.)

"Roman Catholic Church is not the only instrument of capitalism. Its rule is based upon the support of other churches, too, as well as of the bourgeois press and even of the 'freethinking' science. 'Don't touch any of my servants' — shouts the international capital. And where the Roman Catholic priest, the Protestant pastor and the Jewish Rabbi come to its defence assisted by the corrupted press and corrupted science — the simpletons and hirelings from the conciliatory parties are never lacking. Old honest Lansbury, Ben Turner, O'Grady, the leader of the English 'conciliatory' workers, — they all feel disconcerted. They have not got the courage to break with the bourgeoisie and its hangers-on...

"Old Ben Turner has sent us the following wire: 'Human life is valuable. Don't hang the archbishop.' English Labour press has not spent even one tenth of the sum paid for that

telegram on a similar telegram of protest against the execution of South African strikers so brutally carried out at the orders of the idol of British liberalism, General Smuts. But when it comes to priests, the Labour party remembers that human life is sacred. And old Lansbury appeals to our magnanimity thus giving a practical lesson to the revolutionary workers...

"To all the threats of M. Sikorsky and the howling Polish bourgeois press our answer is short: hands off! Don't expect, gentlemen, that your howling will influence in the least the decision of the Soviet Government. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee, in its capacity of the representative of supreme authority, has ratified the verdict upon Archbishop Cepliak and other Roman Catholic priests; in doing so it did but obey the command of its revolutionary conscience and the interests of the revolution. In its opinion the sentence upon the Roman Catholic priests is entirely compatible with the notion of justice of the revolutionary proletarian masses...

"The C. E. C. revoked the death sentence against Cepliak and changed it into 10 years' imprisonment. But the same measure could not be applied to Budkievicz, who was an agent of the Polish Government and whose counter-revolutionary actions were dictated not

so much by religious fanaticism, as in the case of Cepliak, as by the interests of the foreign powers...

"The decision of the Soviet Government, of the Central Executive Committee, will be carried out. Let the international counter-revolutionaries howl as much as they like — that will not alter our decision." (N. 356.)

The mitigation of the verdict against Bishop Cepliak induced the official press to write the following lines:

"The mildness of the Soviet Government must not be falsely interpreted. Let everybody know that under whatever banner the active counter-revolution might hide itself it would be ruthlessly dealt with by the Soviet Government." (N. 357.)

CHAPTER XI.

Destruction of religion and church.

The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was quite right when he said, in his speech in the House of Lords on March 20-th 1923, that the real aim of the Bolsheviks in organising the trial of Mgr. Cepliak was to feel and to prepare the ground for the trial of Patriarch Tikhon.

But it had also the object of testing whether it was not possible to expand the antireligious campaign and to strike a blow at religion in general, at the religious and moral foundations of the whole world. That the Bolsheviks really cherish such a design, may be seen from their own declarations.

> "The methods, the form and the tactics of the antireligious campaign are determined by the general situation. The latter is changing in such direction that soon even the blind will see that we must resolutely 'fight the priest', whether he be called pastor, rabbi, patriarch,

mullah or pope. At some further stage that struggle will inevitably become a struggle 'against God' whether he be called Jehovah, Jesus, Buddha or Allah.

"Perhaps, in Europe the time has not yet arrived for such forms of antireligious propaganda as are possible with us, but it is not far away. We must prepare for it." (N. 358.)

The plans are being carefully worked out and according to the leaders of antireligious propaganda in Russia

"The struggle will develop in the Mohameddan and Roman-Catholic countries in the same way, only its stages will succeed quicker to each other." (N. 359.)

Of course in handling the whole question some skill must be shown. Thus, e. g.:

"In order to strike at the Polish clergy, we must make use of the history of the Popes. The material is exceedingly rich. The wider, the more universal was the influence of the Roman Church, the more vulnerable it was from our point of view. Now it is high time that we took to that task." (N. 360.)

The plan must be carried out energetically but with great skill:

"Some representatives of the Union of Communistic Youth had the idea of transplanting something of the Komsomol Christmas to the West. It was agreed that the greatest care must be taken and that the time was hardly ripe for such an attempt..." (N. 361.)

The whole question is therefore that of tactics and skill. That the carrying out of the plan has already begun and that even some stages have already been, however imperceptibly, passed, is proved by a series of facts which come to light mainly owing to the lack of care on the part of those to whom it has been entrusted. Thus, "Izvestia" in an article about the trial of bishop Cepliak and others say:

"..... if Cepliak and Co. want to obey the canonic law[1]) according to which the Pope alone can dispose of the church property, let them privately sollicit the Pope that he should allow the believers to conclude the agreements prescribed by our law. Otherwise they run the risk of all the Roman Catholic churches being closed..." (N. 363.)

After the conclusion of the Riga Peace with Poland the Soviet Government deemed it necessary to remind the Roman Catholics that their Church and the Pope

[1]) This law is spoken of very slightingly by the same "Izvestia" which calls it "a rather curious phenomenon" (N. 362.)

had to subordinate their canons and prerogatives to the laws of the Soviet Republic. The official publication of the V-th Section said:

> "The conclusion of peace with Poland has led to a series of petitions on the part of the believers of Roman Catholic creed who asked for the return of moveable and immoveable property which formerly belonged to them. The local Departments of Justice of the Provincial Executive Committees of Saratov and Archangel, of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee etc. applied to the Commissariat of Justice for the elucidation of this question believing it to be of general State importance and therefore beyond their competence.
>
> "... The following explanation was given by the V-th Section.... The decree concerning the Disestablishment of the Church and the instruction which developed the principles of that decree are working laws of the Soviet Republic and the Peace Treaty with Poland does not in the least invalidate their principles; therefore the Roman Catholic churches and religious societies on the territory of Soviet Republic have to obey the general principles of the Soviet ecclesiastical policy even after the conclusion of the Russo-Polish Treaty." (N. 364.)

There are many symptomatic facts which show that the expansion of antireligious policy of which

we spoke above is being carried out in a quite real way, though gradually and carefully. Thus,

1) The possibilities of atheistic propaganda among the Moslems are being explored. "Izvestia" in a telegram from Baku reports that at some meeting a resolution has been carried out

"demanding a trial of Mahomet". (N. 365.)

2) Particular attention is paid to the growth of the Unions of Communistic Youth in different countries. At the Conference of the Communistic Youth c. Petrovsky gave the following information on this score:

> "In the East we are continuing to draw over to communism large masses of youth. In Corea there are at present 70 organisations with 50,000 members; in China the Union of Communistic Youth counts 3000 members to whom must be added the 50,000 strong army of Chinese students who are the most revolutionary element among the Chinese people. In Mongolia the Union may count upon 1500 members; in Japan the movement is also progressing, and so on. In Germany 35,000 people belong to the Union which hopes to enlarge its membership to 100,000. In Norway we have 18,000 adherents, in Russia itself more than 300,000 are united in our organisation whereas the total number in the world is about 750,000." (N. 366.)

3) The result of those successes was the appearance of the following admonition in Berlin papers:

> "In order to prevent the disturbance during the service in the Berlin Cathedral the president of the Police has issued an order forbidding all demonstrations in Lustgarten before the end of the Cathedral service." (N. 367.)

(This order had to be issued after the repeated collisions between people who came out of the Cathedral and the young Communists.)

4) Steps are being taken for spreading the cleavage to the Russian Orthodox communities abroad. E. g. "Izvestia" say:

> "... The reformed Church intends to organise its branches abroad ..." (N. 368.)

5) In some places the seeds of discord have already been sown. Thus in connection with the participation of the American Methodist Bishop Blake in the "Red Council" the following official proclamation was issued by the Czechoslovak Branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South:

> "The information that appeared in newspapers, based upon the alleged declarations of Bishop Blake, gives a false picture of the relations between the Methodist Church and the Soviet, or any other, Government.

"Bishop Blake went to Moscow, not as a representative of the Methodist Church, but on his own initiative.

"Basing itself upon the declarations ascribed to Bishop Blake, the Council of The Methodist Church which sits at present in the City of Kansas in the U. S. A., has ordered Bishop Blake to leave Russia.

"The Methodist Church is not, and will never be, a political organisation.

"The great task of Methodism is the spreading throughout the world of the pure doctrine of the Gospels of our Lord and of His love and the endeavour to bring all the men without any racial, political or religious distinctions to the fuller understanding of the principles of Christianity.

"Any information with regard to the above-stated may be obtained in the Methodist Mission in Prague.

(Signed) J. L. Neill,
Head of the Mission." (N. 369.)

The tone of the communist leaders with regard to the leaders of various religious creeds has become of late extremely insolent and arrogant. As an example we may quote the article of the well known communist (and reputed criminal) K. Radek entitled "A History Lecture for the Archbishop of Canterbury together

with a Lecture on the History of Archbishops of Canterbury". It would be absurd to quote this enormous article *in extenso* but some quotations are necessary to illustrate the insolent methods of the Government with which is accredited also the British representative. At the end of the first chapter of this article we read:

> "Let us sum up some of the conclusions we came to in our first chapter.
>
> "At first the Church endeavoured to establish its dominion over the propertied classes. In return the archbishops of Canterbury were decapitated. But when the feudal power, the kings and the landowners, having exterminated the lower clergy and got the Church under their iron rule, began to share the fruits of victory with bishops, archbishops and other ecclesiastical princes these latter not only became the servants of kings and barons, not only submitted to their whim and fancy in matters secular, but also allowed the kings to interfere with religious and ecclesiastical affairs...
>
> "One more fact. The larger part of the estates of the British aristocracy had its origin in the spoliation of the Church under Henry VIII who distributed the Church estates between his lay and secular courtiers. Now when the heirs of the spoliators shout against the spoliation of Church property and

protest against that 'sacrilege' in the name of religion, every conscientious English worker has the right to laugh in their faces... Henry VIII pillaged the Church in order to make gifts to his paramours, archbishops and barons, and the Church of England kept silent when its princes received bribes from the King."

In chapter II entitled "How the archbishop of Canterbury defended 'freedom of religion' from the mutinied peasants and workers" we read:

"according to the history of the archbishops of Canterbury it comes out that when the king appoints himself head of the Church, when he establishes its doctrine and even plunders it just a little — all this means 'freedom of religion' provided the archbishops have their share of the booty.

"... when the believers, the peasants and the workers, basing themselves on the Holy Scripture demand that the priestcraft should give up the life of luxury and gluttony and live with the people — this means a sacrilege for which the archbishops of Canterbury sent to death thousands of labouring people.

"It is now clear that Thomas Devizen, the archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1923 after the so-called birth of Christ, is doing that which his predecessors did in the XIV-th

and XVI-th centuries. The monk John Boll who in the clumsy language of the XIV-th century proclaimed the truth of communism was just as hateful to the archbishop of Canterbury of XIV-th century as the agents of Moscow are to the archbishop of Canterbury of XX-th century.

"How can then Thomas Devizen, the archbishop of Canterbury, help advocating Tikhon, the champion of kings, landowners and capitalists? But the archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Devizen is actuated not only by his hate of the Lollard movement which has been revived in XX-th century in faraway Russia — he is also prompted by sympathy with the Russian landowners and capitalists..."

In chapter III entitled "The immortal shrine of St. Urquhart (!)" we read:

"... when Urquhart thinks that by a certain pressure it is possible to extract concessions from the Soviet Government, the archbishop of Canterbury begins to shed tears about the molested rights of the Roman-Catholic, Jewish and Orthodox religions."

In concluding Radek gives the following

"Advice to the archbishop of Canterbury.

"Dear Thomas Devizen, in spite of my incompetence in matters ecclesiastical I have

given you a lecture on history. If you are going to lie too much, the Communist International will appoint two experts who will concoct such a history of the archbishops of Canterbury that you will fare badly. Since nowadays in England people cannot be burnt down for such things, those blackguards of English communists are going to print that history in million copies, they will depict your sins and those of your predecessors (not forgetting their illegitimate children) ... so you'd better leave Soviet Russia alone. K. Radek." (N. 370.)

All this was an answer to the following telegram transmitted by the Reuter agency:

"London, April 12-th. — The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Westminster and the Chief Rabbi united in the feelings of indignation and disgust have issued a joint protest against the cruel war declared by the Russian Soviet Government upon all religious creeds, and against the wild persecutions of the clergy and laymen. They declare that such policy must arouse a protest of all the friends of religious tolerance." (N. 371.)

The above article of K. Radek is by no means an exception. What are the intentions of the militant

atheists may be seen still more clearly from the following article also published by "Pravda" entitled "Why no proceedings have been instituted against the Pope?" The motto to that article runs as follows:

> "During the trial of Cepliak it was established that the real author of the organised resistance of the Roman Catholic clergy to the confiscation of the Church treasures was the Pope. He ought to be brought to trial in the revolutionary tribunal."

The article itself goes on to say:

> "The recent trial of the Roman Catholic clergy showed once more that not only the Orthodox creed is counter-revolutionary and hostile to the workers and peasants, but also the Roman Catholic (as well as any other).
>
> "One extremely curious detail was revealed in this trial which was not given proper attention to, either in the proceedings or in the verdict. All the accused justified their behaviour with regard to the confiscation by the fact that they merely obeyed the will of their Chief — the Pope — who is therefore the real criminal, they being but his accomplices and agents. That being so ... why did we not institute proceedings against the chief organiser and inspirer, against the chief criminal — the Pope, why did we not bring the revolu-

tionary justice to bear upon him? ... Perhaps because he did not personally offer any direct resistance? But then no more did Tikhon and yet he will be brought to law as the chief leader and wire-puller. Then, perhaps, the Pope was not handed over to justice out of fear of some international complications that might arise in that case? Apparently not, for as it is known no international complications ever arise when a priest is tried, be he the Pope himself — they are usually the outcome of more real and material, economic causes.

"Or, perhaps, it was thought that as the Pope is outside Soviet Russia it would be impossible to carry the verdict out? ... Yet we are firmly convinced, nay, more, we know — that it will be carried out, for sooner or later bourgeois Italy will become a Soviet country and then his Holiness the Pope will be in exactly as awkward a position as his colleague Patriarch Tikhon ... But let us even admit the impossible, let us admit that revolution in Italy will be retarded. Or better let us imagine that the Pope dies an untimely death. Even then trial against him would be of great significance. After all the Pope is regarded by the devout Catholics to be an infallible, saint, almost supernatural being. Imagine this saint being tried and sentenced as an ordinary layman!"... (N. 372.)

This idea was made use of and carried out by the atheistic propagandists who organised public trials against Pius XI. The first of such trials took place recently in Kostroma. It was organised by the communistic nucleus of the local infantry regiment. A man called Epiphanov acted as the Prosecuting Counsel.

In concluding this book, perhaps the most terrible book that has ever been published, we must say that even the trials of the Roman Pontiff have been outdone in Soviet Russia, as will be shown by the telegram below:

> "M o s c o w. — In the club of the Moscow garrizon a meeting took place in the presence of Trotzky and Lunatcharsky at which a trial against God was organised by the propaganda section of the Communist party. 5000 Red Army men attended it." (N. 373.)

To this may be added the following description of that meeting given in a German paper which is rather notorious for its leniency towards Bolshevism:

> "A trial took place.
>
> "This time the accused was neither a social-revolutionary, nor a monarchist, but, if you like, a real monarch, our Lord Himself. He was charged with various ignominious deeds and since — He had the daring to be absent He was condemned *in contumaciam* "

Having narrated further, in the same sarcastic manner, all the details of this absurd and disgusting performance, the author of the article remarks:

> "Such are the ideas that the bolsheviks try to spread among the Russian peasant population which is deeply religious at heart.

But the nation will not stand infinitely suchlike scoffing of its beliefs:

> "It will rise like the biblical pillar of fire, and with its big broad hand it will deal such a blow in the face of the red monkey-buffoon that the whole world will tremble." (N. 374.)

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